THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES OF THE UNITED STATES

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THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES OF THE UNITED STATES

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PREFACE

In the memorable trip over sea in July, 1891, on the fated "City of Chicago," which bore the delegates of America to the First International Council in London, it was my good fortune to occupy a stateroom with Rev. Alonzo H. Quint. This privilege gave much time for happy converse, which was especially valuble to me, a young man. The polity of the Congregational Churches was our favorite theme. And with the great meeting, to which we both journeyed as delegates, before us, it was natural that the Council, its history and function, should have been uppermost in our minds. One day, he turned and said in his emphatic way, "You should write a history of the National Council." My work as Missionary Superintendent for several years in the West had indeed kept the polity of the churches ever before me. The genial doctor's request was not forgotten. With each recurring session since, articles have been prepared by request for our acknowledged denominational journals, which have received far greater commendation than their merit deserved. At the last session, a pamphlet was prepared; and, though a considerable edition was printed, it was immediately exhausted. Requests came from men whose judgment commands respect, in different parts of the country, that the treatise be amplified. The present monograph is the result.

It has been my purpose to tell the history of the Council as much as possible in the language of its own decisions and acts. To tell the story as simply as possible and to seek the interpretation of its function in the abiding principles of our polity, which

have governed our churches from the beginning, has been the constant aim. To each session go up delegates not present in former Councils, anxious, withal, to enter intelligently by sympathetic knowledge into the work of the assembly. This class, especially, has been borne continually in mind.

With the growing expansion of the nation and the multiplication of our churches, there is more and more manifest an earnest desire for fellowship. The proverbial "rope of sand" polity will no longer endure the strain put upon it by a faith which reaches from ocean to ocean, and even to the islands of the sea. Centripetal forces are in the air. Centralization prevails everywhere. The churches have learned by experience that there is strength in union. The Council came at a critical time and fulfilled expectations. It has been accepted as the logical and necessary outcome. In it the churches have found a bond of privilege and blessing. Already it has vindicated its right to be, and has practically overcome all hostile criticism. From its inception, thirty years ago, the Council has steadily grown in the favor and confidence of the churches; and it now seems probable that this growth will continue. If so, the Council is destined to exert an ever increasing influence.

It remains for me to express my sense of gratitude to those of my older, more experienced brethren, East and West, who have encouraged me in the undertaking, and who have kindly assisted me by giving invaluable data and counsel. Especially must I mention Prof. Addison Van Name, who, as Librarian of Yale University, is custodian of the priceless library of the Rev. H. M. Dexter; also Rev. W. H. Cobb, Librarian of the Congregational Library, Boston, both of whom lent their assistance.

THE "NEWTOWN" SYNOD

The First General Convention of the Congregational Churches of America, Held in Newtown, Colony Massachusetts, August 30—September 22, 1637.

Moderators, REV. PETER BULKELEY,
REV. THOMAS HOOKER.

THE "NEWTOWN" SYNOD

"A synode is a joyning or partaking of the authorite of manie churches mette togither in peace, for redresse and deciding of matters, which cannot well be otherwise taken up," is the unique definition of a council, in the first book published in the interests of Congregationalism. This volume, with its long title, so characteristic of the age in which it was written—"A Booke which Sheweth the Life and Manners of all True Christians, and how unlike they are unto Turkes and Papists, and Heathen Folke" was written in 1582 by the founder of our faith and practice, Robert Browne, while an exile in Holland. This little book of one hundred pages gives in substance the present doctrine held by the members of the Pilgrim churches.

Two years later, in another tract, he wrote, "Furthermore thei particularlie agreed off the manner . . . . for seeking to other churches to have their helpe, being better informed, or to bring them to reformation." In these two declarations we find the two great principles upon which the Congregational denomination rests. Modifications many and radical were to be made from time to time; but there has always been a return to the primitive faith and practice. The complete independency and sovereignty of the local, single church, and,

secondly, the fellowship of the several churches as manifested in conference, having no authority over the constituent elements, Congregationalists believe to be the pattern given in the Scriptures.

The familiar history of early Independency in England, with all its vicissitudes, need not here be repeated. Suffice it to say, the Pilgrims longed to leave Holland and migrate to Virginia, a colony of the Crown. And, in order that they might obtain the necessary permission and charter, two of their number, Deacon John Carver and Robert Cushman, bore to London what are termed the "Seven Articles" of their faith and practice. The sixth refers to the polity of their struggling churches, then only four in number. "Wee beleeve y no sinod, classes, convocation or assembly of Ecclesiasticall Officers hath any power or awthoryty att all but as ye same by ye Magestraet geven unto them." These articles were written by John Robinson, the pastor, and Willyam Bruster, the ruling elder, of the Church in Leyden. The prejudices of the King and his counselors were not entirely overcome by this confession of their simple faith in Christ and willing submission to the King's authority. An ambiguous promise that they could go to Virginia, and would not be molested so long as they obeyed the laws, was all they were able to obtain. With this, however, they prepared to cross the stormy sea. Obstacles seemed to rise against them. Former friends proved false. Financial plans almost innumerable failed. At last, less than half the Leyden Church sailed in July,

1620, for England, where many and vexatious hindrances almost discouraged the strong-hearted among them.

After two unsuccessful attempts to sail, the brave remnant of the original band finally embarked on one ship. Upon sighting land, before leaving the vessel, they entered into a Compact. The church members were already bound by a strict mutual covenant. This compact was a civil, not a religious instrument; and yet it was in full accord with the spirit of the faith of the Pilgrims. Nine years later, when the first Puritan church was organized in America, we are not surprised that it was in entire agreement with the principles of faith and polity cherished and upheld by the Independents. The following is their covenant: "We covenant with the Lord and one with another, and doe bynd ourselves in the presence of God, to walke together in all His waies, according as He is pleased to reveale Himself unto us in His blessed Word of Truth." Not content with this, they entered into a much more explicit covenant seven years afterwards. The sixth article of this confession is a positive ratification of the principle of fellowship. "Wee bynd our selves to studdy the advancement of the Gospell in all truth and peace, both in regard to those that are within, or without, noe way sleighting our sister churches, but useing theire counsell as need shall be."

The Pilgrims, who were Separatists, led the way to America. Those who followed from England in much

larger numbers were Puritans, who had no intention of leaving the Church of England. Doctrinally, they were all stanch Calvinists; but in polity they were very far apart. A very considerable element craved greater freedom in both Colony and Church than they had found in Massachusetts. These ambitious spirits found full exercise for their powers, in 1638, in the exodus from the Bay to Connecticut. Thus fully one fourth left the original settlements to found a new State in the wilderness. The new colony acted as a safety-valve. Possibly grave issues were avoided by the emigration westward. The exceedingly erratic, though able, Roger Williams aroused intense feeling. So threatening had become the antagonism to his indiscriminate condemnation of the churches and their toiling pastors, something had to be done. As he had not heeded a timely warning, the magistrates met on October 9, 1635, and the court passed the following sentence: "Whereas, Mr. Roger Williams . . . . hath broached and dyvulged dyvers newe and dangerous opinions, against the aucthoritie of magistrates, as also writt letteres of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviccon, and yet mainetaineth the same without retraccon, it is therefore ordered, that the said Mr. Williams shall dep'te out of this jurisdiccon within sixe weekes nowe nexte ensueing." He went to Rhode Island and formed the Baptist Church, but long before his death renounced it and all communion with the churches. Thus ended the life of a man described by Prof. G. P.

Fisher as "restless, contentious, and precipitate in judgment and action."

To this banishment of Williams we may trace influences which have left their mark to this day upon American Congregationalism. Claiming that he was persecuted unrighteously, Williams appealed to all the churches. In the face of a common danger, the churches were quick to seek fellowship. Mutual responsibility and help alone could cure the growing evil. This sentiment resulted in the passing of a law by the General Court of Massachusetts in March, 1636, that no association of men should be a church "without they shall first acquainte the magistrates, and the elders of the greater p'te of the churches in this jurisdiccon, with their intencons, and have their approbacon herein." Thus, by law, what was essentially a council, composed of church members, was necessary in the organization of any church. This escape out of a dilemma was never forgotten. A crisis had been successfully met and safely passed. To the people of the Colony the enactment commended itself, and it remained no dead letter upon the statute-book. Within a month, the Dorchester people petitioned for the prescribed approval.

A year before the above action was taken by the Court, a family had arrived from England, by the name of Hutchinson. The husband and father, William, Winthrop has described as "a man of very mild temper and weak parts, wholly guided by his wife." She was a woman of very superior talents, of engaging personality and

superabundant ambition. She was warm-hearted, generous and impulsive. Skilful in nursing, she ministered freely to the sick. A former parishioner of the Rev. John Cotton at St. Botolph's in Boston, England, she continued his ardent admirer. Religion was the one theme of supreme interest, and, undoubtedly with the best intentions, she invited the women regularly twice a week to her home. The gatherings grew in numbers and influence. The doctrines and work of the churches were more and more freely criticized. Leading men there were who encouraged her; but all, high and low, came to fear her tongue. She had great antipathy to higher education and declared the ministers of the Colony were wandering from the true faith, "preaching a covenant of works instead of a covenant of grace." Finally, she openly claimed the Holy Spirit was revealing to her the only true faith. Gov. Henry Vane, and others high in the Colony and Church, were her earnest supporters. Her following, however, was almost entirely in Boston, where a minister branded as "antichrists" all who did not accept her views. It was far more than a tempest in a teapot. Excitement and feeling ran so high that the civil magistrates became thoroughly alarmed. January 19, 1637, was observed as a day of fasting and prayer because of the dissensions. Meetings of pastors had before been repeatedly held in the hope of allaying the strife. In the following spring, this unfortunate theological controversy was the chief issue of the campaign, which resulted in the defeat for reelection of Vane, the Hutchinsonian candidate.

The defeat of "the covenanters of grace" embittered them. Something had to be done, and done at once; the Colony and the churches were drifting upon the rocks. The pastors of the churches not in Boston, remembering the beneficial results of conferences between the magistrates and the ministers, now petitioned the Court to call a "synod" constituted of "all the teaching elders through the country" and of "messengers from the churches." That it might be thoroughly representative, "sundry elders were sent for from other jurisdictions." In the meantime, Vane had suddenly and unexpectedly sailed for England, and the active, influential head of the "reformers" had no successor.

August 30, 1637, in a small frame meeting-house in Newtown (now Cambridge), there gathered at the call of the Court the first general conference of the Congregational churches in America. Rev. Peter Bulkeley of Concord, New Hampshire, and Rev. Thomas Hooker of Hartford, Connecticut, were elected moderators. John Higginson was the choice of the body for scribe. The personnel of the synod carried great weight with the public. During the twenty-four days of the session, nearly all the pastors of New England were in attendance, and an equal number of influential laymen. "Some men new come out of England, not yet called to any place here," were also invited to sit in the synod.

The debates were exceedingly earnest, for the Hutchinsonian party was ably represented in the persons of the Boston delegates, who finally protested, claiming no

jurisdiction for the synod, and a few of them left the assembly, not to return. Upon Rev. John Cotton, the esteemed pastor of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, the odium did not lightly fall. "Solemn speeches were made with tears," says Cotton Mather, "lamenting that they should in this important matter dissent from a person so venerable and considerable in the country." As the synod proceeded, greater unanimity was manifest, until, at the last, the result was obtained with few dissenting voices. Rev. John Cotton did not sign the declarations, but he tacitly accepted them. The doctrines declared false and injurious were Antinomian and recalled the abuses of the Anabaptists, the radicals of the German Reformation. The Hutchinsonian doctrine of perfection was also very similar in its spirit to those of the Familists of the seventeenth century, led by David George, who claimed to be a second David. Anne Hutchinson taught that "The resurrection is not of the body, but is the rising of the soul to a new spiritual life, through its union to Christ, and that it takes place, therefore, at conversion." Perfect holiness was another tenet of the faith of this Boston School, and to support it they used the Scriptures freely. It was evident to the members of the synod that Mrs. Hutchinson was the soul of the movement. In a sentence, she is portrayed by Leonard Woolsey Bacon in his admirable "History of American Christianity" as "a clever woman, with a vast conceit of her superior holiness, and with the ugly censoriousness which is a usual accompaniment of that grace, demonstrating her genius

for mixing a theological controversy with personal jealousies and public anxieties."

The Council found as much trouble in stating the heresies placed under the ban, as it did in declaring their condemnation. "Eighty-two erroneous opinions and nine unwholesome expressions" were denounced. Passages of the Scriptures, which had been perverted in interpretation, were cited, and their true meaning stated. It was also declared that disputes in and around the church edifice after services "by private members" were unjustifiable. Church members who did not respond and obey the summons of the Church might be proceeded against though absent. Finally, members who did not agree with their own churches in matters of doctrine should not be granted letters of dismission to other churches. Meetings solely for women, addressed by women on doctrinal matters, were declared to be unwise and inexpedient.

The Colonial officials were as much pleased with the outcome of the synod as the members of the churches. It had brought peace and quietness to distracted communities. The government paid all the expenses of the synod, including board and traveling. Governor Winthrop proposed that the synod convene annually. This was favored by some of the ministers; but, for reasons unknown to us, it was never acted upon. It would have been a long step indeed toward Presbyterianism. Another suggestion also made was, that the synod express its desires as to the best methods for providing regular

stipends for the clergy. This, also, received no favorable action, "lest it should be said that this assembly was gathered for their private advantage."

Upon the dissolution of the council, a few seemed determined to continue the undesirable controversy. And the Court in the following month, after trial, banished Mrs. Anne Hutchinson and her relative, the Rev. John Wheelwright. He went to the frontier in New Hampshire; she, with her family and a score of sympathizers, to Rhode Island. Five years from the time of banishment, having gone to the Dutch settlement on Manhattan Island, she and her family were murdered by the Mohawk Indians, where New York city now stands. Unconsciously, she had called into practice a principle, that of fellowship, which was to be a corner-stone in the building up of a great church.

THE "CAMBRIDGE" SYNOD

The Second General Council of the Congregational Churches in America, Held in Cambridge, Massachusetts, September 1, 1646 — August 25, 1648.

Moderators,
Preachers, REV. EZEKIEL ROGERS,
REV. JOHN ALLIN.

THE "CAMBRIDGE" SYNOD

Robert Browne, the protagonist of modern Congregationalism, recognized fully the principle of church fellowship, "that since all local churches belong to the one family of the Lord, they necessarily owe to each other sisterly affection and activity." This eminently democratic and yet helpful spirit of the one church to the other suffered for a time an eclipse. Barrowe inculcated very decided Presbyterian tendencies. But these Barrowist churches did not increase rapidly. Dexter has told us, "When the Mayflower sailed, in all probability, there could not have been in existence more than three Barrowist churches besides that at Leyden." Henry Jacob, a noble soul, had gone out of the Established Church, and eventually, had organized in Southwark, London, in 1616, the strictly people's church which is now the mother church of the thousands bearing the name Congregational in the British Isles. At the time, 1637, of the first general synod in the Colonies, the leaven of this Southwark organization was working, but not many others of the same ecclesiastical polity had as yet been formed.

For a time after the sailing of the Plymouth Pilgrims, social and political conditions in England impelled large emigration to America. The Puritans, however, rather

than the Pilgrims were in the majority. Thus, in doctrine, the early settlers were united. They were all Calvinists. But in their views as to the true polity of the church, they differed widely among themselves. Consequently, there was an earnest desire to bring about harmony, not so much in faith, for as to that they were agreed, but in the proper forms of organization for the churches. The "covenants" adopted in this period, by the several churches, throw much light upon these efforts to insure harmony. They were not unmindful of the duty they owed one to the other in each church, as the covenant of the Salem people proves: "Wee promise to walke with our brethren and sisters in this Congregation with all watchfullness and tenderness, avoyding all jelousies, suspitions, backbyteings, censurings, provoakings, secret risings of spirite against them." With equal ardor they sought fellowship among the several churches. The members of these churches had left the mother country more as Nonconformists than Separatists, and they remembered the strength of the Establishment in spite of the many evils of a State Church.

When the early churches came to be organized in America, however, the Pilgrim church at Plymouth was the pattern generally adopted. The Colonists tried to conserve the many commendable features of the churches from which they had come, and yet make sure of the liberty which they craved. We have seen that the pure Congregational type was not making much headway just at this time in England. Whatever this

polity might be in theory, it did not offer success in practice. Presbyterianism, in other words, promised to gather to itself all protesting elements. Leaders in Great Britain, conscious of the trend among themselves, looked with amazement and evident concern upon the opposing tendencies which prevailed in America. In 1636, this unrest had found expression in "A Letter of Many Ministers in Old England, requesting the Judgment of their reverend Brethren in New England concerning Nine Positions." These inquiries all referred to church polity and forms of worship. In due time, at the request of the ministers of the Colonies and in their behalf, Rev. John Davenport, pastor in New Haven, answered their inquiries very fully. No doubt, to a degree he disarmed their criticism and allayed their fears. But the answer called forth a rejoinder from the English brethren in 1640, written by one Rev. John Ball. A reply was also made to this by two of the ministers of New England.

About the time the "Nine Positions" were forwarded to the colonists by the Puritans of Old England, another much longer and more comprehensive treatise was sent, entitled, "Thirty-two Questions," dealing with almost every phase of faith and practice. A learned and exhaustive reply was returned to England, written by Rev. Richard Mather. In 1843, together with writings of similar character, it was printed in London. This was the date of the calling of the Westminster Assembly, without the approval of the King, Charles I. The infamous

regime of William Laud, the King's favorite, embittered many against the crown. The Scotch had arisen in the "Solemn League and Covenant" to protect their cherished faith. The Star Chamber and its darksome deeds were renounced. In July of the preceding year, 1642, Parliament had appointed the Committee on Public Safety and called out the militia. Soon the entire country was ablaze with civil war. The next step, Parliament united with the Scots in the League and Covenant, and uniformity in religion was established in England, Ireland and Scotland. But it was the Presbyterian form which was thus established by law. Two thousand Episcopalian rectors, who refused to subscribe, were deprived of their livings or pastorates. Parliament did not give up its control of the churches of the land, though a system had been entrenched which recognized no bishop. At no time since the first coming of the Pilgrims to America were the issues of the churches on this side of the sea so wrapped up in the destiny of those in the old country. It is simply impossible to intelligently comprehend the trend of events in the colonies at this period without following the course of history in England.

The Roundheads, or Puritans, continued to gain in the war with the King. The Independents, under the leadership of that sagacious genius, Oliver Cromwell, were soon in control of the army, and at Marston Moor in a pitched battle in 1644, the Royalists were routed. In 1646, Charles surrendered; the following year, the

army took the King into custody. Subsequently he was tried, condemned, and beheaded January 30, 1649. England was a free Commonwealth governed by the House of Commons. Independency had triumphed over all her enemies. But just what form this was to take in the churches, and what the ecclesiastical influence was to be upon the American colonies, was yet to be determined.

In the church in Newbury, Massachusetts, where Thomas Parker and James Noyes were respectively pastor and teacher, serious trouble arose because their spiritual guides determined to assume more power than the members felt was just or right in a Congregational church. Remembering the beneficial results of consultation in the past few years in the Colony, a conference of the ministers was called to meet in Newtown, or Cambridge. How it was called, or by whom, we do not know. But on September 4, 1643, about fifty of the pastors gathered in the recently erected college building. The conference was not of a synodical character, in that the lay element was in no wise represented. Rev. John Cotton and Rev. Thomas Hooker were elected moderators. No official deliverance was made known, but certain resolutions were adopted expressing the conviction that in the business meetings of the local church, the votes of the laity were essential in admitting or excluding members; *that stated conferences were necessary.* Or, as it was defined by an eye-witness and probable participant, "That consociation of churches, in way of more general

meetings, yearly; and more privately, monthly or quarterly; as consultative synods; are very comfortable and necessary for the peace and good of the churches." The deliberations of this informal conference were communicated to the distracted Newbury church; but, unfortunately, with no apparent results. The trouble continued as before.

Nor was the unrest confined to the one church in Newbury. All the churches in the colonies were more or less disturbed by the disquieting influences constantly emanating from Old England. Something had to be done. Twenty-two months after the above ministerial conference was held, another convened at the same place as before. Nearly all the ministers of the colonies were present. At their request, Rev. Thomas Hooker of Hartford had prepared for approval "A Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline." It deals entirely with polity: "The church is *totum essentiale*, is, and may be before officers. There is no presbyteriall church (*i.e.* a church made up of the elders of many congregations appointed classickwise, to rule all those congregations) in the New Testament. Consociation of churches should be used, as occasion doth require. Such consociations and synods have allowance to counsell and admonish other churches, as the case may require. And if they grow obstinate in errour or sinfull miscarriages, they should renounce the right hand of fellowship with them. But they have no power to excommunicate. Nor do their constitutions binde formaliter and juridice."

At the time of which we now write (the close of the second quarter of the seventeenth century) the population of the Massachusetts Colony was fifteen thousand. But only 1708 had become citizens. Some of those who had not been able to comply fully with the prescribed provisions in order to obtain the rights of suffrage were among the influential men of the Bay region. Appeals were sent by such to the authorities in England seeking redress. If citizenship was to depend upon membership in the church, and membership in the church was to be conditioned by the polity of the church, and the standing of the church was to be defined in part by its relation to other churches, it was evident that these various questions should be authoritatively settled at once. Prof. Walker, in speaking of the period and its problems, says, "There was no standard by which the relations of one church to another could be determined; none which decided whether a certain course of action was Congregational or not. Whether the creation of such a standard was strictly in accordance with the original principles of Congregationalism may be questioned: but there can be no doubt that it was a logical and necessary step in development if Congregationalism was to be enforced by the civil government as an exclusive polity."

When, therefore, a number of the ministers of the Bay petitioned the General Court at its meeting in May, 1646, to issue a call to the churches to assemble by their representatives in a synod, the request met with almost

universal approval in the churches. The prayer of the petitioners was granted and the call issued. Outside of the churches, however, criticism was keen and outspoken. In the Court itself, there was not full unanimity of opinion. The magistrates, all along in sympathy with the ministers, had no scruples. But some of the deputies challenged the right of the Court to *command* the churches; and the original order was reconsidered and modified. Passed in its final form, the churches were *invited* to convene a synod.

The call issued by the Court is an interesting document indeed, because it photographs the prevailing state of the church. It is far too long to quote entire, but its substance is as follows: "That there be a public assembly of the elders and other messengers of the severall churches within this jurisdiction, who may come together and meete at Cambridge, upon the first day of September now next ensueing, then to discusse, dispute, and clear up by the word of God, such questions of church government and discipline in ye things aforementioned, or any other, as they shall thinke needfull and meete, and to continue so doing till they, or the major part of them, shall have agreed and consented upon one forme of government and discipline, for the maine and substantiall pts therof, as that which they judge agreeable to the Holy Scriptures."

When the synod was called to order, it was found that, with the exception of four, all the twenty-nine churches of Massachusetts were represented. The twen-

ty-two churches in Plymouth, Connecticut and New Haven also approved of the synod and were represented in most cases by delegates. Opposition to the synod was confined almost wholly to the Boston church, which dicussed for two weeks the propriety of sending representatives. Finally, Wilson and Cotton went, saying, "They thought it their duty to go notwithstanding, not as sent by the church, but as specially called by the order of the court." Later, the church voted, "that the elders and three of the brethren should be sent as messengers."

Two questions received the attention of the synod: first, the authority of the civil magistrates and the relation of the churches to the Court; second, the character and function of the synod. That the problems before the council might be the more thoroughly presented, Revs. John Cotton of Boston, Richard Mather of Dorchester, John Norton of Ipswich and Ralph Partridge of Duxbury were each requested to prepare "a model of church government." This done, after sitting fourteen days, the synod adjourned to June 8, 1647.

The synod convened pursuant to appointment. The interest was sustained and the attendance good, though an epidemic, which soon compelled adjournment, was spreading. An episode of the meeting was a sermon preached on the opening day by Rev. Ezekiel Rogers, in which he denounced the brethren and repudiated the synod. In the afternoon "Eliot preached to the Indians in their own language before all the assembly."

Meanwhile, as we have seen, the political trend in England was much in favor of the Independent churches in the American colonies. And, what was of more importance, New England was to be left to work out her own destiny, politically and ecclesiastically, without interference from the mother country. In the interval the synod had grown in popular estimation and was to be given a larger place. Since its first session the General Court had made a further request of the Council, namely, that a form of church government be drawn up. The Court made another at its session, October 27, 1647, and invited the synod to prepare a confession of faith: "This court conceiving that it is as fully meet to set forth a confession of the faith we do profess touching the doctrinal point of religion also; we do desire, therefore, these reverent elders to take some pains each of them to prepare a brief form of this nature."

Before the final session of this second synod began, August 15, 1648, copies of the Westminster Confession of Faith had been received from England. It was received with commendation in most church circles. The Synod accepted it gladly as a fitting expression of the faith doctrinally of the churches, "we do judge it to be very holy, orthodox, and judicious in all matters of faith; and do therefore freely and fully consent thereunto, for the substance thereof."

Two drafts at least of church polity, requested to be made by the Court, were presented. That prepared by Rev. Richard Mather, the learned minister of Dor-

chester, was preferred; though certain features of another plan, written by Rev. Ralph Partridge, were incorporated finally. The latter, in some respects, is more nearly like the polity of the churches in vogue at present. He would not give so much power to the civil magistrates, but retain greater independence for the churches. A preface, filling nine pages, written by Rev. John Cotton of Boston, was adopted. It thus begins: "The setting forth of the publick confession of the faith of churches hath a double end, and both tending to public edification. First, by maintenance of the faith entire within itself, secondly, the holding forth of unity and harmony, both amongst, and with other churches."

This instrument, since known as the "Cambridge Platform," in addition to the above preface defending the orthodoxy of the New England churches, contains seventeen chapters. The first four deal with the form of church government, that prescribed in the Word of God being declared Congregational. The fifth chapter reflects Barrowism, stating that the authority is vested in the elders who are elected by the people. The sixth defines the offices of pastor and deacon; the seventh explains their responsibilities and prerogatives. The eighth shows the proper methods of election of officers; the ninth the manner of their ordination. The tenth defines the relations existing between pastor and people. The eleventh chapter has to do with the financial support of the church. The twelfth to the fourteenth inclusive refer to the admission, trial and dis-

mission of church members. The fifteenth begins: "Allthough churches be distinct, and therefore may not be confounded one with another; and equall, and therefore have not dominion one over another; yet all the churches ought to preserve church communion one with another, because they are all united unto Christ, not only as a mysticall, but as a political head: whence is derived a communion suitable therunto." This division of the Platform goes on to state that the fellowship of the churches is exercised in sundry ways,—"by way of mutuall care," "by way of consultation one with another, when we have occasion to require the judgment and counsell of other churches," etc., "by way of admonition" and "by way of participation." The sixteenth chapter defines the character and function of the synod:

> Synods orderly assembled, & rightly proceeding according to the pattern, Acts 15. we acknowledg as the ordinance of Christ: (Acts 15. 2. to. 15.) & though not absolutely necessary to the being, yet many times, through the iniquity of men, & perversness of times, necessary to the wel-being of churches, for the establishment of truth, & peace therin.
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> 2 Synods being spirituall & ecclesiasticall assemblyes, are therfore made up of spirituall & ecclesiasticall causes. The next efficient cause of them under Christ, is the powr of the churches, sending forth their Elders, [&] other messengers; who being mett together in the name of Christ (Acts 15. 2, 3), are the matter of a Synod; & they in argueing (vers. 6.), debating & determining matters of religion according to the word (vers. 7 to 23), & publishing the same to the churches whom it concerneth, doe put forth the proper & formall acts of a Synod; to the conviction of errours (vers. 31.), & heresyes, & the establishment of truth & peace in the Churches (Acts 16. 4. 15), which is the end of a Synod.

3 Magistrates, have powr to call a Synod, by calling to the Churches to send forth their Elders & other messengers (2 Chron 29. 4. 5. to 11.), to counsel & assist them in matters of religion: but yett the constituting of a Synod, is a church act, & may be transacted by the churches (Acts 15.), even when civil magistrates may be enemyes to churches and to church assemblyes.

4 It belongeth unto Synods & Counsels, to debate & determine controversies of faith, & cases of conscience (Acts 15. 1. 2. 6. 7. 1 Chro 15. 13.;) to cleare from the word holy directions for the holy worship of God, & good government of the church; to beare witness against mal-administration & [27] Corruption in doctrine or manners in any particular Church, & to give directions for the reformation therof (2 Chron 29: 6, 7. Acts 15. 24 vers 28, 29.): Not to exercise Church-censures in way of discipline, nor any other act of church-authority or jurisdiction: which that presidentiall Synod did forbeare.

5 The Synods directions & determinations, so farr as consonant to the word of God, are to be received with reverence & submission; not only for their agreement therwith (which is the principall ground therof, & without which they bind not at all:) (Acts 15.) but also secondarily, for the powr wherby they are made, as being an ordinance of God appointed therunto in his word.

6 Because it is difficult, if not impossible, for many churches to com altogether in one place, in all their members universally: therfore they may assemble by their delegates or messengers, as the church of Antioch went not all to Ierusalem (Acts 15. 2), but some select men for that purpose. Because none are or should be more fitt to know the state of the churches, nor to advise of wayes for the good therof then Elders; therfore it is fitt that in the choice of the messengers for such assemblies, they have special respect unto such. Yet in as much as not only Paul & Barnabas, but certayn others also were sent to Ierusalem from Antioch. (Acts 15: 2. vers 22, 23) & when they were come to Ierusalem, not only the Apostles & Elders, but other brethren also doe assemble, & meet about the matter; therfore Synods are to consist both of Elders, & other church-members, endued with gifts, & sent by the churches, not excluding the presence of any brethren in the churches.

The seventeenth and last treats of the relation of the churches to the civil magistrates and the power of the latter, which should be exercised, if need be, to punish idolatry, heresy and blasphemy.

Thus closed the most important single deliverance of any general convention of the Congregational churches in America. After the experience of almost a generation, this declaration defines more fully than it had ever been elucidated before, the faith and practice of our churches. It remained the standard for one hundred and thirty years. And in spite of the long lapse of time it still voices in principle the belief of the Pilgrim churches of America.

This session had been characterized by marked cordiality of feeling and unanimity of opinion. As at the last session the brethren listened to a sermon, this time one was preached by Rev. John Allin of Dedham. It was an expository sermon on the fifteenth chapter of the Acts and explained the character of church synods. Winthrop declared the effort to be "very godly, learned and particular." The work for which they had assembled having been done, a parting hymn was sung and the session was declared dissolved.

The "Platform" thus framed was soon printed in Cambridge, and at the October session of the Court submitted to the magistrates. Their caution is indicated in the action by them, referring the Platform back to the several churches for approval. The following year, the Court having heard evidently from few if any of the

churches, again urges its consideration by them. In May, 1651, the synod was duly thanked for its labors; but as sundry objections had been received by the Court, they were submitted to the ministers to answer. Rev. Richard Mather drew up this reply, which was approved by all the ministers and submitted to the Court, which at its session in October, 1651, over five years after the calling of the synod, officially accepted the declaration and commended it to all the churches. "Whereas this Court did, in the year 1646, give encouragement for an assembly of the messengers of the churches in a synod, and did desire their help to draw up a confession of the faith and discipline of the churches, according to the Word of God. . . . the Court do thankfully acknowledge their learned pains therein, and account themselves called of God to give their testimony to the said book of discipline, that for the substance thereof it is that we have practiced and do believe."

The synod had done for the churches, scattered through the colonies, what they were powerless to do for themselves singly and alone. At a time of threatened dissension, unity had been promoted and the truth indicated. The cardinal principles of the denomination had not only been clearly enunciated but also put into efficient practice. It was a conference without compulsion, and yet leadership was freely accorded to its almost unanimous action. It is to be noted in passing, that in our day the objections to the National Council are owing to the fact that they impute to the triennial conference

Presbyterian tendencies. In the seventeenth century, however, it was the bulwark which saved the day for pure Congregationalism, against advancing Presbyterianism.

THE "AL BANY" CONVENTION

The Third General Convention of the Congregational Churches of America, Held in Albany, New York, October 5 — 8, 1852.

Moderator, REV. T. W. DWIGHT.
Secretary, REV. R. S. STORRS.

THE "ALBANY" CONVENTION

There had been generations of Congregationalists, but, strange as it may appear, no Congregationalism. So long as the churches of the Pilgrim faith were confined to a comparatively narrow strip of country, parallel to the Atlantic coast, the isolation of the local church as the result of its polity was not disastrous. Now, however, the time had come when the methods of the past proved impotent. The sons and daughters of New England had crossed the Hudson, were settling the great Middle States, and were penetrating to the almost unknown beyonds of the vast plains westward. They were children who took the religion of their fathers with them, and were zealous in building up the walls of Zion. But difficulties were at once apparent.

For many, many years, the tendency in New England, and especially in Connecticut, had been toward decentralization. No general assembly of Congregational churches was held in the eighteenth century. Ecclesiastically, as well as politically, local independency was emphasized. A change in the tide came, however, and with the gradual expansion of the New England settlements, the desire for united effort became more manifest. The fear that Episcopacy would be established throughout the colonies by the Crown, had led the Independent and

Presbyterian churches even before the Revolution to meet by their representatives in annual joint convention. The Synods of New York and Philadelphia thus met with the Association of Connecticut. It was, therefore, more the dread of a common enemy than real love they bore each other, which brought them together. "This body met from 1766 to 1775, corresponded with Dissenters in England, collected the ecclesiastical legislation of the Colonies, tried to ascertain the religious preferences of their inhabitants, and sought the union of the non-prelatical churches in opposition to encroachment." In these love-feasts Congregationalists and Presbyterians were brought more closely together. Even the General Association of Connecticut voted in 1805 to "publish a new and elegant edition of the ecclesiastical constitution of the Presbyterian Church."

The first Congregational missionary society in America had been organized in 1798, "to christianize the heathen in North America, and to support and promote Christian knowledge in the new settlements within the United States." On the mission fields of the West very different conditions prevailed from those in Connecticut. Intercommunication became constant. So far back as 1790, the Connecticut Association had voted that a more intimate union with Presbyterians was desirable. Two years later, union was to a degree consummated, three Presbyterian delegates taking seats in the Association, and the same number from Connecticut were accorded identical privileges in the General Assembly. The rep-

resentatives in each body were given full voting privileges. Some "plan of union" in missionary effort was a natural outcome. This was brought about in 1801. For only a short time did the "plan" work smoothly. Both denominations had entered into the compact in good faith, with apparently no thought of deriving unfair advantage. We now, however, look back over the years and marvel at their short-sightedness. They seem not to have apprehended that the outlying regions to the West would ever develop. They expected the struggling missionary churches to remain weak and dependent.

Dissatisfaction with the "plan" grew. The Presbyterians were afraid of the doctrinal influences of the Congregationalists; and the latter were learning by bitter experience that the stronger organization of the former crushed out Congregational polity. How little we can appreciate the height of feeling now! Yet this very question rent the General Assembly in twain. In May, 1835, a special convention was held in Pittsburg, attended by delegates from fifty-four presbyteries. In the General Assembly of the succeeding year, a resolution was passed, favoring a discontinuance of the "plan." In 1837, the crisis came in the Presbyterian Church. It was voted "that the Act of the Assembly of 1801, entitled a 'Plan of Union,' be, and the same is hereby abrogated." Presbyteries which favored the heretical doctrines of the New England theology were "excluded." The Presbyterian Church was rent asunder; and the next year

saw two bodies, each claiming to be the General Assembly. The "New School" wing still held to the "Plan of Union."

The strife within the Presbyterian ranks reacted upon the Congregational churches. The latter began to realize a certain self-consciousness. Doctrinally, as well as in practice, Congregationalists became more and more convinced that they were distinct and that the evident distinction demanded separation. Freedom had to be obtained at any price. Our pastors had virtually been forced to become members of Presbytery; and Congregational churches, though they had power to vote themselves into presbytery, had no adequate power to get out when once in.

A great cry over a little wool, it all seems, until one takes up the question seriously in study: "What was the all-sufficient influence that made possible the calling of the first general synod of the Congregational churches in America for more than two hundred years?" Yes, they did make a mountain out of a mole-hill; and yet tremendous issues were at stake. And they knew it. Must the polity of the Pilgrims be hedged in in the New England States? If not, it must be free, if the churches are to expand and bless a continent. Gillett, in his "History of the Presbyterian Church" concedes the great gains which had come because of the decided advantage acquired and held. Rev. A. Hastings Ross—and we have no better authority—places the loss to Congregationalism, because of the long existence of the compact,

at more than two thousand churches. It was yet to be conclusively proved whether Congregationalism could bear transplanting. A trial, at least, must be made.

Therefore the General Association of New York issued a call for "a convention of ministers and delegates of the Congregational churches of the United States." The response was remarkably hearty and gratifying. If anything were needed to prove the widespread desire for denominational freedom and autonomy, this result was sufficient. From seventeen states four hundred and sixty-three delegates (it is to be noticed, so great was the interest that the attendance was much larger than in any one of the recent sessions) met in "convention" in Albany, October 5, 1852. At no subsequent national gathering have so large a proportion of the real leaders of the denomination been present. If so much space had not already been employed in leading up to the meeting, we could dwell with profit upon the personnel of this memorable gathering.

Rev. Leonard Bacon, as chairman of the Business Committee, before convening, had sent circulars, announcing the main purport of the assembly:—

"1. The construction and practical operation of the 'Plan of Union between Presbyterians and Congregationalists' agreed upon by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the General Association of Connecticut, in 1801.

"2. The building of church edifices in the West.

"3. The system and operation of the American Home Missionary Society.

"4. The intercourse between the Congregationalists of New England and those of other states.

"5. The local work and responsibility of a Congregational church.

"6. The bringing forward of candidates for the ministry.

"7. The republication of the works of our standard theological writers."

This well considered and definite aim of the committee was closely followed. The separate problems propounded were referred, each to a committee. The "Plan of Union" was turned over to a committee of ten, "two from New England, and one from each state represented," save Oregon and the District of Columbia. The debate was very free and full. It is reported quite fully in the Minutes, and in that respect we can now follow this convention more accurately than the recent sessions, as the discussions can no longer be printed in the proceedings of the Council.

The unanimous result attained is indicated in the following resolutions adopted:—

"Whereas, the Plan of Union formed in 1801, by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the General Association of Connecticut, is understood to have been repudiated by the said Assembly before the schism in that body of 1838, though this year acknowledged as still in force by the General Assembly which met last in Washington, D. C.; and

"Whereas, many of our Presbyterian brethren, though

adhering to this Plan in some of its provisions, do not, it is believed, maintain it in its integrity; especially in virtually requiring Congregational ministers settled over Presbyterian churches and Congregational churches having Presbyterian ministers, to be connected with Presbyteries; and,

"Whereas, whatever mutual advantage has formerly resulted from this Plan to the two denominations, and whatever might yet result from it if acted upon impartially, its operation is now unfavorable to the spread and permanence of the Congregational polity, and even to the real harmony of these Christian comunities;—

"Resolved, 1. That in the judgment of this convention it is not deemed expedient that new Congregational churches, or churches heretofore independent, become connected with Presbyteries.

"2. That in the evident disuse of the said Plan, according to its original design, we deem it important, and for the purpose of union sufficient, that Congregationalists and Presbyterians exercise toward each other that spirit of love which the Gospel requires, and that their common faith is fitted to cherish; that they accord to each other the right of pre-occupancy, where but one church can be maintained; and that, in the formation of such a church, its ecclesiastical character and relations be determined by a majority of its members.

"3. That in respect to those Congregational churches which are now connected with Presbyteries,—either on the above mentioned plan, or on those of 1808 and 1813,

between Congregational and Presbyterian bodies in the State of New York,—while we would not have them violently sever their existing relations, we counsel them to maintain vigilantly the Congregational privileges which have been guaranteed them by the Plans above mentioned, and to see to it that while they remain connected with Presbyteries, the true intent of those original arrangements be impartially carried out."

For a long time there had been growing a sense of dvision between the East and the West. Both sides were to blame. The East showed a surprising lack of charity in their consideration of the spirit and purposes of the younger and more aggressive brethren in the newer States. The West was restless under the least restraint in doctrine or polity and did not have the considerate regard for the conservatism of New England that wisdom would seem to inculcate at all times. Were the faith, practice and traditions of the fathers to be perpetuated by the sons in the enlarging empires of the West? Or was it inevitable that Congregationalism must be divided into East and West, as other communions had been divided North and South? This was a most momentous situation which confronted the convention. We, to-day, enter into the inheritance vouchsafed by the skill, candor and faith with which the delicate matter was treated and settled. Resolutions which received the hearty support of both New England and Western delegates were passed, urging a more intimate acquaintance and a closer fellowship between the Eastern and

Western churches, and discountenancing charges often unadvisedly made in the older communities against the doctrinal belief and churchly practice of the West.

After such a manifestation of genuine love and loyalty, it was natural that the feeling should take some practical form. A call was issued for fifty thousand dollars with which to provide a fund for the assistance of the churches in the West in the erection of needed buildings. The response was cordial and exceeded the most sanguine expectations at the time; $61,891 was sent in, and in due time wisely distributed.

It is no wonder that students of our church polity look upon the Albany Convention as a golden mile-stone in our history. A crisis was at the time reached and safely passed. The need of united effort was never more keenly felt; nor was union in heart and purpose ever more manifest. Had the Albany Convention failed ignominiously, there would have been scarcely a possibility of a National Council in subsequent years. Williston Walker, in "Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism," that *vade mecum* of all Congregational churchmen, says, "From the meeting of the Albany Convention there has been growing sympathy between all branches of Congregationalism, East and West, and a growing self-respect and confidence in its own right to be."

Rev. T. W. Dwight, of Maine, had been chosen to preside over the deliberations of the body, and with gracious dignity did he perform his honored part. Rev. Noah Porter, of Connecticut, and Rev. Asa Turner, of Iowa, were

elected Vice-presidents. Revs. R. S. Storrs, of Brooklyn, and John C. Holbrook were secretaries. So high was the standard set that the meeting has given the model to all succeeding national conventions. Out of its candid deliberations and helpful fellowship sprang the Congregational Church Building Society, the Year Book, and the Congregational Library Association. The administrations of the foreign and home missionary societies received pledges of friendship and support which have never been renounced, and an impetus that has never been lost. The time of its meeting was most opportune and happy. Yet in reviewing our denominational press of the day, we see with what bitter and intemperate criticism the holding of the convention was assailed. Some good brethren in the Lord verily believed that the peace and independency of the churches would be forever lost. The convention was duly held, the business before it was transacted and the body dissolved. Congregationalism, East and West, was united and still free.

THE "BOSTON" COUNCIL

The Fourth General Convention of the Congregational Churches of America, Held in Boston, Massachusetts, June 14—24, 1865.

Moderator, HON. W. A. BUCKINGHAM.
Preacher, REV. J. M. STURTEVANT.

THE "BOSTON" COUNCIL

In the beginning, the Church of Christ grew. Christianity is a growth, not a manufacture. In the above is refuted the sophistry of assertive ecclesiasticism. To divine leadership, manifesting itself in quickened spiritual life and activity, have Congregationalists ever been taught to look for guidance. The distinct epochs in the history of the Church of the English Pilgrims in America have always been marked by the clear calls of God to duty and enlarging opportunities for service. True Congregationalism possesses ever-widening horizons. Congregationalism offers consecrated ambition a free field. Congregationalism is favorable to individual initiative. Congregationalism lends itself readily to experiment.

More than ten years had passed since the Albany Convention had brought together the messengers of the churches, East and West, and conclusively proved the unity of the denomination. Meanwhile, the country had witnessed unprecedented development; many thousands from the Old World had sought homes on the free soil of America. Vast areas had been occupied. A great civil war was now waging, the issues of which, already foreseen, were to determine the destiny of the country. A new era was before the church. The emancipation of

three million slaves, the necessary social and political reconstruction, all propounded problems of immense significance.

So long before as 1670, Increase Mather had written, in speaking of the polity of our churches, "It has ever been their declared judgment, when there is want of either light or peace to ask for counsel, that in matters of common concernment, particular churches should proceed with the concurrences of neighboring churches." In an emergency, Congregationalism consequently waits to hear no bull of pope or decree of bishop; rather is the voice of the people sought. "The Triennial Convention of the Congregational Churches of the Northwest"—a body whose special work concerned the Chicago Theological Seminary—at its regular meeting held in April, 1864, was deeply moved by the changing conditions of society and the churches. The following resolution defines their sense of responsibility:—"That it is expedient for the churches to inquire what is their duty in this vast and solemn crisis, such as comes only once in ages, and what new efforts, measures and policies they may owe to this condition of affairs,—this new genesis of nations."

Thereupon the Rev. Truman M. Post of St. Louis offered the following motion, which was unanimously passed: "That the crisis demands general consultation, coöperation, and concert among our churches, and to these ends, requires extensive correspondence among our ecclesiastical associations,—or the assembling of a National Congregational Convention." This proposal

was presented to the Illinois General Association at its meeting at Quincy, May 27, 1864, and was received with heartiest commendation. It was then addressed to all the State Associations and was heartily approved, with the single exception of New Hampshire; though one of the largest local associations of that state favored the proposal. The American Congregational Union (now the Congregational Church Building Society) invited the several committees from the different states to meet in Broadway Tabernacle Church, New York. Rev. Leonard Bacon was chosen chairman of this meeting, which convened November 16, 1864. At this gathering the name "National Council" was first formally chosen. They voted with marked unanimity that the proposed National Council should be held in Boston, June 14, 1865; and submitted the following subjects for consideration:

"1. Home and Foreign Evangelization.

"2. Church Building.

"3. Ministerial Education and Support.

"4. Local and Parochial Evangelization.

"5. A Statement of Church Polity; and the Revs. Leonard Bacon, A. H. Quint and H. M. Storrs were requested to prepare a suitable report.

"6. A Declaration of Christian Faith as held in common by the Congregational churches."

This was also referred to a committee to report, consisting of Revs. Joseph P. Thompson, George P. Fisher and E. A. Lawrence.

To the Albany Convention, each church had been invited to send pastor and delegate. To the prospective Council, however, the representatives, both clerical and lay, were to be chosen by the churches, gathered in their local conferences or associations, in the proportion of two for each ten churches.

In the Old South Meeting-house in Boston, the place made forever sacred by the sacrifice of the patriots of the Revolution, which British soldiers later used as a barracks, five hundred and two delegates gathered pursuant to the summons, June 14, 1865. Twenty-five States were represented, sixteen delegates were present from foreign lands and fourteen were made honorary members. Hon. W. A. Buckingham, Governor of Connecticut, was chosen Moderator. Hon. Charles G. Hammond, the large-hearted layman of Chicago, and Rev. Joseph P. Thompson, pastor of Broadway Tabernacle, New York, were elected as Assistant Moderators.

It was the largest national representative assembly Congregationalism had seen; and, after a third of a century, the remark is still true. Ten days were spent in careful deliberations and few moments were lost. A factor of the Council which commended itself to the body—and that has become incorporated into our traditions—namely, the Business Committee, gave wise guidance. This committee consisted of Revs. A. H. Quint, Samuel Wolcott, Benjamin Labaree and Deacons Philo Carpenter and S. F. Drury. They were instructed to prepare "a docket for the use of the Moderator," and

save "by special vote of the Council, no business" was to be "introduced which has not . . . passed through the hands of the committee."

The committee appointed by the preliminary meeting in New York on the Polity of the Church made its report on the third day. It was the clearest and most exhaustive declaration of the principles governing Congregational churches that had ever been prepared. It was immediately referred to a special committee, embracing Rev. J. P. Gulliver, Prof. Samuel Harris, Rev. Nelson Bishop, Prof. E. A. Park, Rev. J. G. Davis, Rev. Joshua Leavitt, Prof. S. C. Bartlett, Rev. Charles C. Salter, Rev. Jesse Guernsey, Rev. James S. Hoyt, Rev. J. D. Liggett and Judge Lester Taylor. Rev. E. F. Burr of Lyme, Connecticut, was added later. An entire week these learned men considered the report, when it was found that a small minority would prevent a unanimous approval. The discussion waxed warm at times. It was evident that the West favored a positive declaration and one defining authority, inclining to emphasize the fellowship of the churches. A few in New England, on the other hand, held out for independency, pure and unadulterated.

In the dilemma, Prof. E. A. Park rose and moved a substitute, which was adopted, as follows:—

"Resolved: That this Council recognizes as distinctive of the Congregational polity:—

"First, the principle that the local or Congregational church derives its power and authority directly from

Christ, and is not subject to any ecclesiastical government exterior or superior to itself.

"Second, that every local or Congregational church is bound to observe the duties of mutual respect and charity which are included in the communion of churches one with another; and that every church which refuses to give an account of its proceedings, when kindly and orderly desired to do so by neighboring churches, violates the law of Christ.

"Third, that the ministry of the Gospel by members of the churches who have been duly called and set apart to that work implies in itself no power of government and that ministers of the Gospel not elected to office in any church are not a hierarchy, nor are they invested with any official power in or over the churches."

The report presented by the original committee, together with the various amendments offered and passed, were referred to a new committee, with the request that the result of their deliberations be printed, and published to the churches at their earliest convenience. On this committee were Revs. Leonard Bacon, A. H. Quint, H. M. Storrs, E. A. Park, Samuel Harris, S. C. Bartlett, George P. Fisher, J. H. Fairchild, J. P. Gulliver, Benjamin Labaree, Mark Hopkins, William Barrows, Julian M. Sturtevant, Truman M. Post, Edward Beecher, William Salter, J. S. Hoyt, David Burt, J. P. Thompson, Nathaniel A. Hyde, Leonard Swain, Richard Cordley, Rufus Anderson, and the following well-known laymen: Woodbury Davis, Henry Stockbridge, Asahel Finch, Warren Currier and J. H. Brockway.

In few matters submitted by national assemblies have the subjects in hand been given more thoughtful care. Not until seven years after did this large committee publish the result of their deliberations to the churches, under the title: "Ecclesiastical Polity: the Government and Communion Practised by the Congregational Churches in the United States of America, Which were represented by Elders and Messengers in a National Council at Boston, A.D. 1865."

It is one of several documents, prepared with much prayer and mature consideration, that has been apparently buried and lost sight of. A peculiar feature of this declaration, sometimes called "The Boston Platform," is the respect it has received and the weight it has carried in other lands. Foreign missionaries find in it much to guide them, and the churches of our order in Australia and other foreign lands have been frank to acknowledge their sense of indebtedness to it.

It is to be noted in passing, that a similar result followed the famous Savoy Confession in 1658. It had little effect on the churches which prepared it, but Increase Mather brought it to America and it was long the creed of the Congregational churches of New England.

The "Minutes" of this Council fill 464 pages, many of them in fine print. Only a synopsis can at best be attempted. The several benevolent societies, through whose agencies the missionary work of the churches is carried on, were passed in review. Special stress was placed upon the inadequate means of the Home Missionary Society

because of the rapid development of the West. It was also the beginning of the era which was to witness the extraordinary increase in manufactures and the growth of cities. Systematic beneficence was dwelt upon, and loyalty to our own agencies emphasized. The call for more and better trained pastors was urgent, though it was deplored that so many ministers, evidently worthy and capable, were without charge. As a result of the call issued by the Albany Convention, a goodly sum had been secured for the erection of churches. The American Congregational Union had been organized. Undenominational agencies also received recognition, such as the American Bible Society, and the Sunday-School Union.

The delegates assembled represented 2750 churches, 3000 ministers and 275,000 church members. Rev. Julian M. Sturtevant, the pioneer missionary, college founder, and State organizer, preached a memorable sermon two hours in length. Unlike many of the denominations, Congregationalism was not divided on the slavery question, nor rent asunder by the War of Secession so recently ended. The South and the Southwest, Dr. Sturtevant saw with the eye of a prophet, were soon to welcome all who came in the name of the Prince of Peace.

We have seen that a debate extending over nearly the entire session, from time to time, on a statement of polity, had been practically settled. Another committee appointed in New York reported a Declaration of Faith. This debate was continued so long and the minutes are

so voluminous that one especially interested must be referred to them; or to the Congregational Quarterly x: 377; Schaff's "Creeds of Christendom" iii: 374; or Walker's "Creeds and Platforms," p. 553. No sooner was the report submitted, than the propriety of making the declaration was questioned. Overwhelmingly, it was decided that the action was germane to the function of the Council and in accord with the spirit of Congregationalism. The original report was assigned to a committee which ultimately was composed of Revs. John O. Fiske, Nahum Gale, Joseph Eldridge, Leonard Swain, A. G. Bristol, J. C. Hart, G. S. F. Savage, Deacon S. S. Barnard, and Profs. D. J. Noyes, Samuel Harris, E. A. Park, E. A. Lawrence, Noah Porter, J. H. Fairchild and Joseph Haven.

This committee made an even longer report than the first, adding to the number of subjects treated and especially amplifying the doctrinal statements. One paragraph was inserted, that at once provoked fierce controversy:—

"In conformity, therefore, with the usage of previous councils, we, the elders and messengers of the Congregational churches in the United States, do now profess our adherence to the above named Westminster and Savoy Confessions for 'substance of doctrine.' We thus declare our acceptance of the system of truths which is commonly known among us as Calvinism, and which is distinguished from other systems by so exalting the sovereignty of God as to 'establish' rather than take

away the 'liberty' or free-agency of man and by so exhibiting the entire character of God as to show most clearly 'the exceeding sinfulness of sin.'"

In the course of the debate, Prof. Park, the beloved teacher of Andover, declared: "We are Calvinists, mainly, essentially, in all the essentials of our faith." The hour had come to close, the question was still before the assembly. And the Council had voted four days previously to meet on the morrow, not in Boston, but on Burial Hill, Plymouth, where rest the ashes of the martyrs to that first winter in the New World. The day was cloudless. The Council went down one thousand strong. It was very apparent that the prevailing sentiment of a decidedly large majority was essentially Calvinistic. It was clear that if forced to a vote the "Calvinistic" section would command the suffrages of all but a very few. Harmony was to be obtained if possible: and the unanimity essential could only be attained by eliminating a few of the objectionable statements. Some of the leading men decided at once to prepare a new declaration leaving out the objectionable features, and present it in the morning. So great was the pressure of business and so short the time that Dr. Quint completed the draft, with his hat as a tablet, while the train was rushing onward to Plymouth. The resolutions were presented and approved. Thus the Rubicon was passed and what came to be known as the "Burial Hill Declaration" united the Council. Dr. Quint has written: "A spirit of gratitude to God was everywhere felt. A danger

had been arrested. The real unity of our churches in faith had providentially found expression."

It is a document in which we may take just pride. It is to be regretted that the declaration is so little known among the rank and file of our churches. The opening lines at least must be quoted:—

"Standing by the rock where the Pilgrims set foot upon these shores, upon the spot where they worshiped God, and among the graves of the early generations, we Elders and Messengers of the Congregational churches of the United States, in National Council assembled,—like them acknowledging no rule of faith but the Word of God,—do now declare our adherence to the faith and order of the apostolic and primitive churches held by our fathers, and substantially as embodied in the confessions and platforms which our Synods of 1648 and 1680 set forth or reaffirmed."

After reference to a committee, it was at last offered for final action in the Council on the succeeding day. The vote was in the affirmative, hearty and unanimous. The members rose as by common impulse and joined in prayer with Rev. Ray Palmer. The meeting closed with the singing of his hymn, "My faith looks up to Thee," and the benediction. Dunning, in his popular volume, "Congregationalists in America" quotes from the New York "Independent," of current date, an article, written on the spot, picturing the scene on Burial Hill:—

"It was a sublime moment! Nearly two hundred and fifty years had passed since the feeble 'Mayflower' com-

pany had repeated in solemn covenant the articles of their despised faith on that spot. 'What do these feeble Jews?' said a sneering world. 'Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.' Now five hundred men, the representatives of three thousand churches, the representatives of ideas which have triumphed gloriously and finally over the land, the representatives of Puritanism, pure and simple, unchanged, unabashed, bold and intense, as in the days of the Commonwealth, stood on the soil made firm by the heroic tread of those despised men and exultingly declared, 'This faith is our faith. These ideas have saved our country, and are going forth, conquering and to conquer, over the world.' "

Thus was brought to an end a convention which must ever hold a unique place in the annals of the Church of the Pilgrims. In the language of him who was more potent than any other one man in calling the convention and shaping its policy, it had been proved that a national convention could assemble "without domination over churches and without danger of assuming authority. It has shown that mutual fellowship and communion in Christian love form a tie as strong as that of any ecclesiastical machinery;—that unity may be preserved by brotherly consultation without the penalties of judicial procedure. It has given evidence that, with the possession of a common faith, co-operation in the great enterprises of the Gospel is the strongest bond of fraternity under Christ."

THE "OBERLIN" COUNCIL

The First Session of the National Council, Held in Oberlin, Ohio, November 15—21, 1871.

Moderator, REV. W. I. BUDINGTON.
Preacher, REV. LEONARD BACON.

THE "OBERLIN" COUNCIL

The two national conventions which had met in comparatively recent years had left the happiest of memories. Their deliberations, though lacking legislative powers, had resulted in untold good to the denomination. Their representative character, the spirit and wisdom of the proceedings, had won even doubting minds to the value and necessity of a similar body, which should be permanent and meet regularly. This feeling found a voice in the recognized denominational press. All parts of the broad land seemed equally desirous that such an organization should be established.

It remained for the Church of the Pilgrimage, in Plymouth, Massachusetts, to which the last Convention had repaired, and where the memorable confession of faith was adopted on Burial Hill, to send out letters inviting sister churches of our faith to commission delegates to attend a preliminary meeting, March 2, 1870. This commission was invited to suggest appropriate measures commemorating the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims. On convening, it was soon found that they were of one mind. It was deemed expedient, however, to make haste slowly. So the entire matter, after full consideration, was referred to a committee, of which Hon. Edward S. Tobey was chairman, Rev. H.

M. Dexter, secretary, and Deacon Samuel Holmes, treasurer. Associated with them were Revs. W. W. Patton, A. H. Quint and Ray Palmer, with Deacon A. S. Barnes,

In accord with the instructions given, this provisional committee requested all the Congregational churches in the United States to send each a representative to the "Pilgrim Memorial Convention" the following month in Chicago. Pursuant to the call, this convention met in the First Church, April 27, 1870. B. W. Tompkins, of Connecticut, was chosen chairman, Hon. E. D. Holton of Wisconsin, Rev. Samuel Wolcott of Cleveland and President George F. Magoun of Iowa, his assistants. The secretaries were Revs. H. C. Abernethy of Illinois, Philo R. Hurd, Michigan, and L. Smith Hobart from New York.

Again the pulse of our churches was felt. It was a matter of so much importance that no mistake should be made. Continued deliberation revealed a unanimous sentiment that a convention, meeting regularly, without judicial authority, yet representing all our churches, competent to discuss the needs of the denomination and voice the sentiment of our people, should be instituted as soon as it could be wisely brought about. The executive committee, consisting of Rev. W. W. Patton, Rev. R. B. Howard of Illinois, Hon. J. C. Walker of Michigan, and James L. Kearnie, Esq., of Missouri, offered the following, which was unanimously approved: "That this Pilgrim Memorial Convention recommend to the Congregational State Conferences and Associations, and to

other local bodies, to unite in measures for instituting on the principle of fellowship, excluding ecclesiastical authority, a permanent National Conference."

Very soon the General Association of Ohio received the invitation and acted affirmatively, appointing a committee with Rev. A. Hastings Ross as chairman to correspond with other State bodies and facilitate if possible the holding of the proposed convention. This initiative was everywhere cordially welcomed. The General Association of New York proposed to the churches of the country without further delay, that they elect commissioners to a preliminary meeting to be held in Boston, December 21, 1870. The standing committee of the Massachusetts Association adopted the proposal and sent out invitations accordingly.

A goodly number responded. It was the third preliminary meeting held to consider the question propounded. Unanimously, the following was passed: "That it is expedient, and appears to be clearly the voice of the churches, that a National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States be organized." Only one State, which contained but seventy churches, had voted adversely on sending delegates,—and that by a majority of only one. Of this meeting, held in the Congregational Library, Rev. E. B. Webb was chosen Chairman, Hon. A. C. Barstow of Providence, Rhode Island, Assistant, Rev. W. E. Merriman of Ripon, Wisconsin, Scribe, with Hon. H. S. McCall as his Assistant. Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connec-

ticut, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin were represented. It was a happy coincidence that the day the above action was taken was the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the exact date, December 21, 1620, on which the little Pilgrim Church had landed at Plymouth so long ago.

One more thing had to be done, namely, the appointment of a Provisional or Executive Committee to prepare the draft of a suitable constitution, select the time and place of meeting, designate the proper representation of the churches, and issue the customary call or invitation. Another link in the chain had been added. The Committee, elected by ballot, was composed of Rev. A. H. Quint, of New Bedford, Massachusetts, President William E. Merriman, of Ripon College, Prof. S. C. Bartlett, Chicago Seminary, Deacon Samuel Holmes, Montclair, New Jersey, Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard, U. S. Army, Rev. William Ives Budington, Brooklyn, and Hon. A. C. Barstow of Providence. Other well-known men who shared in these deliberations were Revs. James G. Vose and Leonard Bacon, Bicknell the educator, President Israel W. Andrews and Edward W. Gilman, who was to give so many years to the American Bible Society.

It proves the eminent conservatism of Congregationalism that so much thought and prayer should have been given to the proposed organization before the convention met which was to bear the name of the First National Council. No one can ever bring the charge that the Council was the sudden creation of intemperate haste.

In pursuance of the call issued by the Committee of the Convention held in Boston eleven months previous, a Council of the Congregational churches of the United States assembled in the Second Church, Oberlin, Ohio, Wednesday, November 15, 1871.

A temporary organization was effected by the election of Hon. Erastus D. Holton of Wisconsin as Moderator. Rev. James H. Fairchild welcomed the coming of the guests in a felicitous address. The 3100 churches, 3000 ministers and 312,000 members were represented by 276 delegates. It is profitable and interesting, withal, to recall the names of the messengers who were deemed worthy by the churches to represent them in this first national convention, under a constitution, of the Communion in America. Space permits reference to only a few of the many. From distant California came Rev. Israel E. Dwinell, who, with his beloved confrere, Rev. J. A. Benton, was to give his life to the founding of Pacific Theological Seminary. Colorado had but one delegate in the person of Rev. Nathan Thompson. The Connecticut delegation comprised twenty-seven men, among whom were Revs. Leonard Bacon, W. H. Moore, Orlando H. White, Jeremiah Taylor, Asa S. Fiske and Elisha C. Jones. Laymen whose names are cherished were Deacon Charles Benedict of Waterbury, the Hon. David P. Nichols, Whitney Elliott, Esq., the Hon. Benjamin Douglas, Henry P. Haven, long a pillar of the church in New London, and the Hon. William A. Buckingham, Governor of the State.

The Illinois representatives were to have much weight in the coming deliberations of the body. Among them were Revs. J. E. Roy, W. W. Patton, G. S. F. Savage, who was elected temporary Scribe, Julian M. Sturtevant, and his son of the same name, John K. McLean, since a leader in good works on the Pacific Coast, and Alexander B. Campbell. Prof. William Coffin, Stephen B. Stinson, Esq., and William Converse, M.D., were among the laity.

Iowa was in the midst of remarkable development as a State and sent Revs. William M. Brooks, long the efficient President of Tabor, J. A. Hamilton, Harmon Bross, who later was to be claimed by Nebraska, George F. Magoun, always to be associated with the struggles of Iowa College, Ephraim Adams, the pioneer, and Joseph W. Pickett, who afterwards lost his life in the missionary service in the Rocky Mountains.

Rev. Peter McVicar, the builder of Washburn College, and Rev. Richard Cordley, who was to take an active part in subsequent national assemblies, were from Kansas. Samuel P. Benson, Simeon Page and Joseph Titcomb were leading laymen who came from Maine. Massachusetts sent a remarkably able delegation of forty-six men. Hon. Alpheus Hardy, Deacon J. Russell Bradford, Alexander Hyde, Esq., Deacon Ezra Farnsworth, were among the representatives of the pew. Revs. E. B. Webb, Edward S. Atwood, Mason Noble, Jr., Edmund K. Alden and Joshua W. Wellman were of the clergy, Among the pastors from Michigan, Warren F. Day, Le-

roy Warren and Jesse W. Hough should be mentioned. Rev. James W. Strong, who was to build a worthy monument in Carleton College, was sent by the General Conference of Minnesota. The nestor of St. Louis, in the person of Rev. Truman M. Post, brought credentials from Missouri, together with Revs. Minot J. Savage, Edwin B. Turner and James H. Harwood. Rev. Edward Hawes was sent by the churches of Philadelphia and Gen. O. O. Howard from Washington, D. C.

The New York and Brooklyn Associations of New York elected Revs. William Ives Budington, Ray Palmer, Henry M. Storrs and William H. Ward. No one was to exert a more potent influence in shaping the form and character of the Council than Rev. A. Hastings Ross of Ohio. From far away Oregon came Rev. George H. Atkinson to receive a merited welcome. Rev. James G. Vose was present from Providence, and Rev. Henry S. Bennett from Nashville. Wisconsin was ably represented by Rev. Charles H. Richards, subsequently called to Philadelphia, Rev. Samuel W. Eaton, the honored father of noble sons, and the Hon. Samuel D. Hastings.

The first morning and afternoon sessions were given to the main business before the assembly, namely, formal and permanent organization. In the evening, Rev. Leonard Bacon preached from the text, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1 : 22). A chorus of colored students from Fisk University added much

to the enjoyment of the guests. Papers were read and discussed upon the following subjects, familiar even now:—"Vacant Churches and Unemployed Ministers," "Congregational Literature," "The Supply of the Ministry," and "The Unity of the Church."

The last provoked a long and animated discussion, which resulted in passing what the Council was pleased to call a "Declaration of Faith." The closing paragraph reads: "We believe in the Holy Catholic Church. It is our prayer and endeavor, that the unity of the church may be more and more apparent, and that the prayer of our Lord for his disciples may be speedily and completely answered, and all be one: that by consequence of this Christian unity in love, the world may believe in Christ as sent of the Father to save the world."

After two days given to the discussion of the constitution presented by the Committee, it was unanimously adopted. Two paragraphs caused much debate: first, that relating to "faith;" second, the name, many contending that the body should not be called "Council" at all. But no other substitute was received with favor. In lieu of no better name, "Council" was finally adopted unanimously.

The Council proceeded to organize under the Constitution, and elected officers by ballot. The Rev. William I. Budington, of Brooklyn was chosen Moderator. He remarked significantly in taking the chair, "We stand on the grave of buried prejudice." Gen. O. O. Howard and the Rev. George H. Atkinson were Assistant Mod-

erators. Rev. A. H. Quint, New Bedford, Mass., was the choice for Secretary, Rev. William H. Moore, Berlin, Conn., Registrar, and Hon. Charles G. Hammond, Chicago, Treasurer.

A pleasant occasion followed in the laying of the corner-stone of a new building for the Theological School. A strong appeal was made for funds to build the Congregational House in Boston. Sunday afternoon, the Lord's Supper was observed. The service was conducted by President Charles G. Finney, who, later, at the invitation of the Council, preached. Many requests having come that a manual of doctrine and polity be prepared, a strong committee was assigned to this work, "whose sanction may give currency to the manual, not as a book of binding authority, but as a means of general instruction, commended to the churches for its real merits."

A petition was sent to Congress urging the publication of document 37 of the third session of the Forty-first Congress, that sets forth "the great service which Dr. Whitman and his intrepid companions rendered to our country in saving our Northwest Coast from the grasp of a foreign power." A deficiency in the treasury of the American Home Missionary Society came up for extended consideration. At the close, a resolution was passed appointing a committee to consider and report, "Whether any consolidation of such organization is practicable, with a view to the promotion of unity and efficiency of operation, and the reduction of expenses, which are felt to be needless and therefore burdensome."

The Council made a declaration, as a result of two hours of debate, in regard to the duty of ministers to be in orderly connection with some ministerial or ecclesiastical organization which should be able to certify to their regular standing in the ministry, urging the churches to employ only such as have evidence of their good standing.

The action of the Government in negotiating a new treaty with Great Britain was commended and the principle of international arbitration was heartily endorsed. The spiritual quality had been manifest. The marvelous address of the venerable Charles G. Finney left its indelible impress upon the minds and hearts of his audience. The usual vote of thanks was recorded. The hymn, "Ye Christian heralds, go proclaim," was sung; the benediction was pronounced; and the moderator declared the session dissolved.

THE "NEW HAVEN" COUNCIL.

The Second Session of the National Council, Held in New Haven, Connecticut, Sept. 30 — Oct. 4, 1874.

Moderator, L. S. FOSTER.
Preacher, REV. R. S. STORRS.

THE "NEW HAVEN" COUNCIL

The first Council to bear the name "National," under a constitution, held in Oberlin, in 1871, more than met expectations. The action was positive and potent; the reaction came in 1874, and was not less pronounced. In the history of the Councils, one soon discerns an ebb and flow, as in the tides of the sea.

The fourth general convention of the Congregational churches of America was called to order in the historic Center Church, on the Green, New Haven, Connecticut, September 30, 1874, by the Rev. Henry M. Storrs. An address of welcome was given by Rev. Leonard Bacon, the tenth pastor of the church in which the Council met. It was reminiscent and dwelt upon the history of the State, the city and the churches of our order in New Haven. The First Church is coeval with the town. On the 15 April (old style) 1638, the first settlers of the place, having just landed, assembled for public worship under the guidance of their chosen pastor, Rev. John Davenport. Over a year, the ecclesiastical and civil affairs of the community, then called Quinnipiac, were conducted under a provisional arrangement or "plantation covenant." The congregation was called together by the beating of a drum from a lookout on the roof. Sentinels were always placed on guard to give warning of the incursions of the savages. Six field-pieces, ready for instant

action, made the assembly more secure. The building in which the Council convened was erected in 1812 and is the fourth reared by the society.

When nominations were called for, an unusually large supply of moderatorial timber appeared,—Hon. L. S. Foster, Connecticut, Hon. E. B. Gillett, Hon. William B. Washburn, Hon. John Z. Goodrich, all of Massachusetts, Rev. Joseph Emerson, Wisconsin, Rev. George F. Magoun, Iowa, and Colonel C. G. Hammond of Chicago. The first named was elected, with Rev. George F. Magoun and Rev. I. E. Dwinell of California as Assistants. In passing, it may be noted that one of the number, Washburn, received this great honor at a subsequent session of the Council.

An amendment to the By-laws was voted, "That persons selected as preachers, or to prepare papers, or to serve upon committees, appointed by this body, should be entitled to seats in the session in which they are to serve, without privilege of voting."

No set order has been observed from the beginning in arranging the program for the several days of the different sessions. The evening of the opening day, so great was the desire to hear the invited preacher that the edifice was filled to its utmost capacity, and then many were turned away. Rev. William M. Taylor, pastor of Broadway Tabernacle, New York, conducted the service. Rev. Richard S. Storrs chose as his texts 1 John 4 : 8, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love," and Matthew 5 : 8, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they

shall see God." The introduction pictured the development of science, possibly the most marked of all the phenomena of the present century. This change has been felt in every sphere of human life. Science has gone forward from triumph to triumph until, it would seem, nothing could remain which would not be subdued. Science is an all-conquering monarch. "But it has never yet bridged the chasm between molecular action and spiritual forces." Science unaided cannot account for the universe as it is. The hidden forces appear to be the most potent and regnant. Science explains much that we see and hear; but beyond are vast worlds which invite exploration but defy conquest. The spiritual is a necessity to complete the material. God is. All things have their origin in Him. From Him proceeds all power in heaven and in earth. He is a Person; "and personality in man is the inseparable correlative of the personality of God."

With masterly genius he graphically sketched the profound lessons of cosmogony. We behold a world; it must be accounted for. Then, passing to the history of mankind, he boldly outlined the onward progress of the race. Spirituality is the crowning. "So we come to that answer to our question, which the Lord has given, 'The pure in heart shall see God.'" Science, then, if wise, does not attempt to discover God. "It works with wrong instruments;—it is like hunting for love with a microscope." The Church is an association of believers in the overruling providence of God, which is mindful of the sparrow's fall and yet guides worlds in their flight. This faith is the pledge of immortality.

The sermon required a little more than an hour and a half for delivery. No notes whatever were used. We are wholly dependent on the reporters' synopsis. The fame of the orator had preceded him. The audience was composed of "the old families," the New England Brahmin class, and a large representation of the faculty of the College. Probably in no single effort in any session of the Council has eloquence arisen to such superb power and exalted heights. The Assistant Moderator, Rev. George F. Magoun, led in prayer, and what must be known as one of the most remarkable of all the services held under the auspices of the Council closed.

At the opening of the second day President Noah Porter extended a cordial invitation to the members of the Council to visit the different departments of the University. Rev. I. E. Dwinell of Sacramento, California, read a paper on the "Fellowship of the Churches." A cardinal principle of our polity, it has, nevertheless, been overlooked and neglected. Its neglect has caused our denomination to fall behind others in the march of evangelization across the continent. It was a calm and clear presentation of one of the canons of our practice, "emphasizing the responsibilities of Congregationalists by reason of the peculiar privilege of their polity." It was urged that "Congregationalists, of all others, must be good Christians to be good churchmen."

The American Congregational Association reported. It was hoped the new Congregational House in Boston would be ready for dedication next Forefathers' Day.

The total cost had been about one-half million of dollars. The citizens of Boston gave the larger part of this amount. "Here is an opportunity and a privilege before the entire country. It is a benefaction that makes glad many hearts and is a blessing to all the missionary work of the churches."

The Hon. Charles T. Russell, president of the Congregational Publishing Society, spoke briefly of its work. Rev. Christopher Cushing reviewed the activities of the American Congregational Union. Dr. Buffield spoke of the happy marriage of the College Society with the Education Society and the applause which greeted his remarks indicated that many rejoiced in this union of effort. "And now if you want a still further reduction in the percentage of expenses,—swell our receipts."

The American Board was represented by Secretary Treat; the American Home Missionary Society by its Secretary, Dr. Coe; and the Rev. M. E. Strieby addressed the house on the need of more men and money to answer pressing calls from dark corners of our own land.

Each session of the Council since its organization has had, with very few exceptions, some one supreme issue that has overshadowed all others. The benevolent societies, which are the agents of the churches, their constitutional requirements, and their methods of administration furnished the all-absorbing theme at this session. At Oberlin, three years before, a strong and conservative committee had been elected to consider thoroughly the

societies and their work. Rev. E. S. Atwood of Massachusetts, Col. Charles G. Hammond, Illinois, Warren Currier, St. Louis, Rev. L. H. Cobb, Minnesota, Rev. W. W. Patton, Chicago, Henry P. Haven, Esq. and R. B. Thurston of Connecticut reported unanimously as a committee and recommended nine changes. "The Congregationalist" of current date has the fullest account we possess of the recommendations and the discussions which ensued.

"Certain grave difficulties are found to stand in the way of recommending any radical change in the existing order," the report declared. But, they also assert, "There was a leakage and a waste incident to the present methods of administration which might be stopped by more thorough and compact organization. Greater efficiency would be almost certain to result from consolidation." In almost every session to the very last of the New Haven Council this matter came up in one form or another. It would not down. The committee was composed of men who possessed the fullest confidence of all the churches. In the light of the prevailing sentiment of the day, their report was conservative. What was intended to bring light, did so, but it started a conflagration. The entire question of the function of the Council was debated earnestly. Some insisted that it should be simply a conference, passing no resolutions and recording no votes. Others would greatly increase in number and power its prerogatives. There were those who deprecated any action whatever involving the be-

nevolent societies and their work. This argument was answered by saying something must be done to save the societies, as they had already forfeited the confidence of many givers. On the whole, it may be said New England men disclaimed giving any advice. Dr. E. P. Goodwin, pastor of the First Church, Chicago, is quoted as saying, "I hope the Council will stand fairly up to its privilege and duty of advising with respect to the work of the societies." It was not so much what was said as it was the manner of the saying which aroused an antagonism seldom if ever equaled in any discussion in the Council. Diplomacy was sadly lacking.

A feature of the early sessions of the Council, very wisely dropped since, was the time given to listening to delegates from corresponding bodies. Each necessarily brought a very brief message, superficial and too often smacking of mere formality. The Council manifests no less good will in deciding that this perfunctory feature should be wholly eliminated.

Rev. E. B. Coe of the American Home Missionary Society read a paper, prompted by his rich experience, on "Comity between Denominations on the Home Field." Hundreds of towns in America were declared to be overchurched. Not enough Christianity, but too much ecclesiasticism. It struck a responsive chord in the hearts of many in the body. The writer quoted Bishop A. C. Coxe as saying that he had found a town in New York State where five spires point to heaven, and yet the doors are closed and there is no preaching of the gospel, all be-

cause of sectarian strife and bitterness. Dr. Coe said he could name now one hundred churches which should have special interest in the remark of our Lord to Peter, —"by what *death* he should glorify God."

Dr. Quint, as Secretary of the Council, reported the triennial statistics of the churches, which numbered 3325, ministers 3238, church members 323,679, indicating a gain in three years of 17,161. In that period, 413 churches had been organized, but 209 had been dropped. Idaho, West Virginia and Nevada had entered the ranks of our brotherhood.

Rev. Zachary Eddy presented a carefully prepared paper on "The Occasions of Hope for a Great and Immediate Effusion of the Holy Spirit." It was followed by an hour of devotional exercises. Rev. W. H. H. Murray had been invited to read upon the subject, "How to Make the Pulpit Effective with the Masses." It was decidedly brilliant, like the meteoric course of its once distinguished author. "We must study the actual man, not the theoretical." Barbed shafts were hurled at the weak spots in the armor of Congregationalists who have always been in danger of permitting a cold intellectualism to chill their hearts.

President James H. Fairchild of Oberlin brought some strong meat and placed it before the body in his paper, "The Character essential to the Religion that shall take firm hold upon the American People." He regarded the gospel as eternal and unchanging, but its application must vary from age to age. "The religion which shall

take strong hold upon the people must ask nothing of faith that reason cannot grant." Various reports were made, and the Rev. A. F. Beard read a paper,—"The Undeveloped Power in the Churches and Individuals."

Most beautiful autumn weather continued through the entire session. Sunday, the closing day, many of the pulpits of the city were filled by delegates to the Council. In the afternoon, the Lord's Supper was observed, and, at the close, the benediction was pronounced, and the session was declared dissolved. Thus ended a session that commands a distinct place in the history of the Council. It defines the low-water mark in the series. The tide was at the flood in Oberlin; it had fallen in New Haven. The New York "Independent," in current issue editorially says, "The Congregational Council at New Haven was not intellectually the strongest body of men that this denomination has ever assembled. Many of the recognized leaders of the commuinion were absent, and the great vacancy which they made was not at all filled by certain confident brethren who hastened to the front to take their places. If the Congregationalists are to perpetuate this system of councils, they must learn to suppress bores." In the perspective of years, we may look back with less feeling than the antagonisms of the hour aroused. The session taught wholesome lessons which have not been forgotten. It marks the limit in the swing of the pendulum. Mindful of conscious strength, it was testing its power, and, like many a young athlete, overdid in the effort. Wisdom was to be attained by experience and a golden mean was to be found.

THE "DETROIT" COUNCIL

The Third Session of the National Council, Held in Detroit, Michigan, October 17—21, 1877.

Moderator, HON. W. B. WASHBURN.
Preacher, REV. ZACHARY EDDY.

THE "DETROIT" COUNCIL

The third session of the National Council was called to order Oct. 17, 1877, in the Second Congregational Church, Detroit, Michigan. The credentials of the delegates were collected and their names were read. From nominations without remark, Hon. William B. Washburn, formerly United States Senator and Governor of Massachusetts, was chosen Moderator. Rev. Aaron L. Chapin, of Wisconsin, and Deacon Charles G. Hammond, of Chicago, were elected Assistant Moderators.

Among the long list of the delegates, space permits reference to a few only. Deacon Stephen S. Smith, who generously contributed for many years to the churches of San Francisco, was one of the four who represented California. Rev. R. T. Cross was sent by the State Association of Colorado. In the Connecticut delegation were Rev. Charles Ray Palmer of Bridgeport, Deacon James B. Williams of Glastonbury, Rev. Frederick A. Noble of New Haven, and Deacon William C. Crump of New London. Rev. Charles Seccombe, the pioneer missionary, brought credentials from the new Association in Dakota Territory. Rev. Alexander R. Thain, later to serve as editor of "The Advance," came from Galesburg, Illinois, Charles W. Keyes, Esq., from Quincy, Rev. John W. Bradshaw, subsequently called to preach to the students of Oberlin, was sent from Elgin

Association. Rev. George Huntington, then a pastor in Oak Park, was another member of the same delegation.

Iowa chose the veteran Rev. William Salter, Revs. George F. Magoun, William M. Brooks and Julian M. Sturtevant, Jr. Hon. Nelson Dingley, whom the churches were to honor later, Rev. Ezra H. Byington, who was to write of the Puritans, Deacon Simon Page of Hallowell and the Rev. William H. Fenn were the messengers from the Pine Tree State. Massachusetts again sent a noble body of men with Rev. H. M. Dexter at their head. Rev. Joshua Coit came from Lawrence, Deacon Warren F. Draper from Andover, Rev. John D. Kingsbury hailed from Bradford, and Deacon A. Lyman Williston, the wise counselor of Mount Holyoke, Rev. Francis N. Peloubet, whose aid in Sunday-school instruction we all welcome, and Rev. Washington Gladden from Springfield, were among the number. Rev. Joseph B. Clark and Prof. Thomas W. Bicknell brought credentials from the Suffolk South Conference.

To this Council Rev. Richard Cordley came, not from Kansas but from Flint, Michigan. President James B. Angell and Deacon Allen Fish of Port Huron were also in the Michigan party.

President James W. Strong and his pastor, Rev. Delavan L. Leonard, were from Northfield, Minnesota. Rufus J. Baldwin was the only Minneapolis man present. Rev. Henry C. Simmons, who was to give his life to North Dakota, and Rev. John H. Morley, his worthy successor

as President of Fargo College, were among the North Star representatives.

Rev. Robert West brought his cheery greetings from St. Louis, and Rev. Lewis Gregory came from Lincoln, Nebraska. The General Association of New Hampshire elected only one man, the Rev. Franklin D. Ayer. New Jersey was to be heard frequently in the persons of Revs. George M. Boynton of Newark, Jeremiah E. Rankin and Amory H. Bradford.

From New York came Rev. Samuel H. Virgin of the metropolis and Rev. Henry M. Ladd of Walton.

Ohio commissioned the beloved Revs. Samuel Wolcott and Allen C. Barrows of Kent, who was to succeed him in the State Missionary Society. Rev. Stephen D. Peet of Ashtabula was already beginning to win laurels in archeology. Prof. John M. Ellis of Oberlin, President Israel M. Andrews and his pastor, Rev. Theron H. Hawkes, of Marietta, and the late Rev. Justin E. Twichell were also in this goodly company.

Rev. A. J. F. Behrends sat in the Council from Rhode Island, and Rev. Henry S. Bennett from Tennessee. Rev. George L. Walker came from Brattleboro, Vermont, with Hon. Franklin Fairbanks of St. Johnsbury and Rev. Russell T. Hall of Pittsford. The Congregational and Presbyterian Convention of Wisconsin was present in the person of Rev. Aaron L. Chapin; and the future distinguished teacher of Philosophy in Yale, Rev. George T. Ladd, left his home in Milwaukee, as did the Rev. Arthur Little of Fond du Lac.

"I love thy kingdom, Lord," may well be entitled the Council's favorite hymn. After the singing, the usual committees were announced. A subject which has received careful attention at several Councils and to this day remains unsettled, namely, some method by which the expenses of the delegates could be met, was given to a committee for consideration.

The weakness of the Congregational polity is painfully apparent in that we read in the minutes of almost every Council, a subject which was very forcibly presented by Rev. H. M. Dexter, "Churchless Pastors and Pastorless Churches." To this day the weak spot in our polity is the pastorate; it should be the strongest. The greatest waste is not in money, but in what is more precious, men. The closing words of this able report will appeal to all who preach the gospel of the Christ: "No, we must not ask for nor expect—I doubt if we want—a 'smart' man. Let us be contented with a good man, and if when we get him, we find that he is not perfect, let us not find fault with him until we be perfect ourselves."

The Rev. Constans L. Goodell of St. Louis, who was always welcomed in all the assemblies of the churches, read a paper on "Woman's Work as a Part of the Religious Movement of the Time." He facetiously introduced his theme by saying that in discussing a theme upon which so many good men differ widely, he feared he might bring down the house upon him as did Samson of old. After a luminous review of the work of women in different epochs he asks the question: "Is it wise

and expedient to organize permanently in the churches separate boards for women?" He answers in the negative: "The woman's board divides the stream of benevolence."

Wednesday evening, the Rev. Zachary Eddy of Detroit, Michigan, preached the Council sermon from Hosea 14: 5-7. Since the last triennial gathering, there had been marked spiritual interest in many of the churches. The sermon was decidedly evangelistic. He defined a true revival as "like a gentle rain falling upon fields mellowed by the plough and the harrow, and thickly sown with good seed." But he urged as of greatest importance, "regular, practical, unremitting Christian work," giving as a reason that "great, periodical refreshings, precious as they are, do not suffice to make the church perennially flourishing."

Rev. Arthur Little, of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, read a paper on "Fellowship and Union Meetings." It was followed by a general discussion stimulating and helpful because of practical suggestions. "One sign of a vital, aggressive Christianity is its inventiveness. Eager for new conquests, intent on fresh victories, it will find new lines of march, discover new points of attack, forge new weapons, venture upon new combinations and try new experiments. It is the glory of the gospel that it is still flexible and free in its methods. It is more and more clearly seen, as the vision becomes clarified, that there are 'diversities of gifts,' yet it is still the same spirit, the same Lord, 'the same God which worketh all in all.'

Among the manifold agencies owned and blessed of God, during the last three years, are 'Fellowship Meetings.' They grew out of the movement in the Oberlin Council for the organization of home missionary societies in the West. Home evangelization was their chief aim. They have generally been managed by missionary committees or by the missionary superintendent. Properly begun and conducted, these meetings have usually grown in intensity and power to the end. Their primary purpose is not revival work, but to create and give practical expression to the sentiment of Christian fellowship and fraternal sympathy among neighboring churches with a view to mutual helpfulness in spiritual things."

> "Blest be the tie that binds
> Our hearts in Christian love;
> The fellowship of Christian minds
> Is like to that above."

In the discussion which followed, it was repeatedly stated that, in the potent religious movements of recent years, East and West, under Moody, Needham, Hammond and other evangelists, the spiritual results were due in large measure to union effort. Pastors, it was declared, could at least assist each other, and thus double the force in the time of harvest. The power of the brotherhoods in the Roman Church was said to lie in the fact that the missionaries do not labor singly and alone. Congregationalism because of its polity is in peculiar need of just that strength that comes from united effort.

An overture on the observance of the Sabbath elicited little interest. It is difficult to cast any new light upon this much debated theme. The action of the Council was sane and commendable: "We cordially and unanimously join the memorialists in emphasizing the supreme importance of educating the great masses of our people to an intelligent recognition of the important social and civic advantages flowing from a reverent use of the Christian Sabbath, and of the serious, complicated, and widespread evils that accompany its desecration, by devoting it to the purposes either of pleasure or gain." From President Woolsey of Yale a paper was received on "The Bible in the Public Schools." The members of the Council evidently were not all with him when, in his summary, he said, "I question very much whether the formal reading by rote of the Bible in the schools, as a school book, does so much good as to be justly regarded essential." It was referred to a committee, which reported later through its chairman, President Angell, urging public sentiment "to prevent, if possible, the demand for the entire exclusion of the Bible from our public schools." President Bascom introduced the old problem, "State Universities versus Denominational Colleges." Over it, the debate waxed warm. Finally, the report of Rev. C. R. Palmer was adopted, "that the ordinary colleges cannot safely be abandoned, while, at the same time, there need be no antagonism to the universities."

The several national benevolent societies presented

statements which were referred to committees. At this Council began the movement to organize a national society for providing assistance to disabled or aged ministers. Rev. Justin E. Twitchell was the chairman of the committee having the matter in charge.

An overture from the General Association of New Jersey was presented, received, referred to a committee of five, and answered. This communication raised the question whether the National Council was germane to Congregationalism. This overture is considered more at length in the chapter, "The Function of the Council."

Rev. Henry Clay Trumbull, of Pennsylvania, read a paper on "Sunday-School Work; its Sphere and its Methods." Let us note in passing his definition: "By the Sunday-school I mean that department of the church in which Bible truth is taught by form of question and answer, to scholars gathered in groups under intelligent and disciplined teachers."

The Committee on the Parish System, of which Rev. Samuel Wolcott was chairman, brought in an exhaustive report,—the longest ever presented to any of the sessions thus far. It fills nearly one hundred pages, in small type, of the published minutes of this assembly. Much subsequent legislation in the several states of the Union has rendered this deliverance obsolete.

A communication was received from the Rev. Prof. George E. Day of Yale, calling attention to the eminent propriety of the Council erecting a memorial to Rev. John Robinson. A committee was duly appointed, and

fourteen years later, at the close of the First International Council, a beautiful tablet was unveiled with appropriate ceremonies in the city of Leyden, Holland.

Sunday afternoon, in the First Church, the Council met in the closing session to observe the Lord's Supper. It was peculiarly fitting that this assembly should close in a service of tender and grateful remembrance. One of the best and most profitable of all the sessions of the Triennial thus ended. The Moderator declared the Council adjourned without day.

The previous session was the dark hour for the Council. Circumstances tended to minimize the interest and discredit the proceedings. This session redeemed the Council. Of the fellowship which the Council forcibly expresses, the West feels the need more deeply than the East. In weakness, churches want not alone brotherhood, but to be mothered. If not fostered and encouraged in the beginning, many die. The Council sent forth a note of cheer, calling to an enlarging privilege and duty, which went out to all the churches.

THE "ST. LOUIS" COUNCIL

The Fourth Session of the National Council, Held in St. Louis, Missouri, November 11 — 15, 1880.

Moderator, REV. HENRY M. DEXTER.
Preacher, REV. SAMUEL E. HERRICK.

THE "ST. LOUIS" COUNCIL

"This is an evil generation: they seek a sign," was the text of the sermon preached by invitation before the fourth session of the National Council by Rev. Samuel E. Herrick of Boston. Profitably, we could quote from this inspiring discourse: "This tendency to exalt a sign to the place of reality, or to put up paper for gold, when it arises in the religious life of a man or a people, is a disastrous thing." The closing words are worthy of remembrance: "Signs of life are not life, because they may be manufactured. Life itself is the breath of God moving upon the soul of man, humbled at his feet, lying open to his free and gracious and constant inspiration. In an organization like ours, the individual is peculiarly the unit of influence, not the church or the minister. The denomination must be what its humblest members are. The consecration of the whole is in the fidelity of its elements. Let us make our order a power *for* God, by receiving into our own souls the power *of* God."

Deacon Amos C. Barstow of Rhode Island, as chairman of the provisional committee, called the session to order. Rev. Henry M. Dexter of Boston was chosen Moderator. Rev. Julian M. Sturtevant of Iowa and Rev. John D. Smith of Alabama were elected his assistants.

As usual, the roll of delegates contained many of the most forceful of the clergy and laity of the churches.

Alabama was represented for the first time in the Council. Rev. Henry S. De Forest, who gave his life to the education of our brother in black in Talladega, sat as a member. Rev. I. E. Dwinell came again from Sacramento, California. The first woman to be sent as a delegate to the Council came from Denver in the person of Miss Amanda R. Bell. It indicates very clearly the genius and spirit of our practice, that, when her name came before the committee on credentials, she was at once enrolled without question. Rev. C. M. Sanders, so long the faithful pastor in Cheyenne, Wyoming, was also in the Colorado delegation. Rev. Joseph Anderson was placed at the head of the large Connecticut body. The future pastor of Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, Rev. L. H. Hallock, left his parish at West Winsted. Rev. James B. Gregg, the dean of the Congregational corps of Colorado, in later years, was also from the Nutmeg State. An able company of deacons were of the party,—Benjamin Douglas of Middletown, Henry Sawyer, New Britain, George M. Woodruff, Litchfield, Charles Benedict, Waterbury and John O. Couch, Middlefield.

Dakota Territory sent two useful representatives in Revs. Stewart Sheldon and Joseph Ward of Yankton. Rev. Joseph E. Roy was one of the two men who brought their credentials from Georgia. John Deere, the extensive manufacturer, was sent by the Rock River Association of Illinois. Rev. Geo. C. Adams, later graduated from a St. Louis pastorate at the call of the "Old First," San Francisco, California, brought greet-

ings from Alton. James W. Scoville, the honored layman of Oak Park, Rev. Jean F. Loba, Deacon Mason Bull, of Ottawa, and Rev. Frank P. Woodbury, whom the American Missionary Society was to choose later as its secretary, were of this goodly company.

Indian Territory for the first time sent a delegate in Rev. Edward Morris of Caddo. Rev. Alvah L. Frisbie of Des Moines led the Iowa band, among whom were the veteran educator, Josiah L. Pickard of Iowa City, Rev. W. A. Waterman, Marion, John Meyer, Newton, and the Rev. Charles C. Cragin of McGregor. Rev. Daniel P. Kloss, who has so long served faithfully in Arizona since, came from Kansas, as did Deacon Edwin Tucker of Eureka and Rev. James G. Dougherty, Ottawa.

The expanding influence of the communion is shown in the coming of Rev. W. S. Alexander from New Orleans. Maine did not send a large delegation. Among the thirteen were Deacons J. L. H. Cobb, Samuel L. Boynton and William E. Gould. At the head of the list elected by the General Association of Massachusetts stood Rev. Charles D. Barrows, whose premature death is mourned in San Francisco. G. Henry Whitcomb, the prominent layman of Worcester, Rev. Egbert C. Symth of Andover Seminary, Rev. Mason Noble, Sheffield, and Deacon Charles A. Richardson of the Congregationalist were of the party; which also included Rev. W. S. Hawkes, later to be called to frontier work in Utah, Rev. Albert H. Currier, who had not then gone to Oberlin,

Deacon Frank B. Knowles, the wise counselor of the churches in Worcester, and Rev. Michael Burnham of Fall River.

Michigan, among others, commissioned Revs. Leroy Warren, A. Hastings Ross, the able writer on our church polity, Warren F. Day, Jesse H. Hough and J. Newton Brown. The new superintendent of the state home missionary society of Minnesota, Rev. L. H. Cobb, was associated with Deacon David C. Bell of Minneapolis, Revs. Reuben A. Beard of Brainerd, George A. Hood and John W. Bradshaw. The host of the occasion fulfilled the duties graciously as only Constans L. Goodell could; but he had able and kindly associates in Revs. Truman M. Post of St. Louis, P. B. West of Lamar, and Nathan J. Morrison of North Springfield.

Nebraska took advantage of the proximity of the place of meeting and sent a strong delegation, led by Rev. Edmund B. Fairfield of Lincoln. Rev. Lyman Abbott brought greetings from New York, as did Rev. John C. Holbrook, who was spared to write his "Memoirs" when past ninety years of age, Rev. Edward Beecher, Rev. Frederick W. Beecher and Rev. Henry L. Hubbell of West Newark. Not only the Nation goes to Ohio for her presidents, but our churches find in the Buckeye State a never failing source of supply, which is well illustrated in the delegation to this Council. Revs. Josiah Strong and Frank Russell, later to be associated in general work, Rev. William Kincaid and Rev. C. H. Daniels, both since called to the secretaryship of national socie-

ties, Rev. Russell T. Hall, and Hon. William H. Upson of Akron were in the company. Pennsylvania, which, by the way, has never been a strong factor in the Council, had but one representative, Rev. Henry C. Crane. Rev. Benjamin A. Imes came from Memphis, Rev. John J. Wooley from Pawtucket and Rev. Lewis O. Brastow from Burlington.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name," was sung and an address of welcome of rare felicity made all the guests feel at home at once. In the beginning of the session several memorials were presented praying for a restatement of the faith of the Pilgrim churches. We can do no better than quote from the petition presented by the Ohio delegation. The resolutions were originally prepared by the Rev. James Brand and adopted by the State Association. The prelude reads: "We, the members of the Congregational Association of Ohio, believing that there is a widespread desire among the churches of our own and other States for a restatement of our Congregational symbol,—a formula that shall not be mainly a re-affirmation of former confessions, but shall state in precise terms in our living tongue the doctrines which we hold to-day." Continuing, the memorial calls attention to the inadequacy of the Savoy Declaration of 1658, as well as the much later "Burial Hill" declaration. Upon the same subject, the overture presented by Minnesota said, "There is doctrinal unrest. Good men are examining the foundations of our faith. The creeds of atheism, infidelity, and agnosticism were never more

widely promulgated than to-day. The evangelical creed was never more plausibly caricatured than to-day. If our churches, through the National Council, can have grace given them to make a testifying statement of their belief in the old doctrines, and again so define these doctrines in modern phraseology that the world shall know exactly what we believe, their action will stimulate thought and will promote discussion, the outcome of which will be favorable to evangelical truth."

These memorials, together with an able paper, "A New Declaration of Faith," read by Rev. Hiram Mead of Oberlin, provoked a long and exceedingly profitable discussion. It was indeed gratifying beyond expression, that, though the churches of our order had spread over a vast continent, the unanimity with regard to creed was indisputably manifest. A committee was appointed, to which were committed the several memorials, with the request that they report to the next session of the National Council in 1883.

At this point, Rev. Alexander Hannay, the Secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, was invited to address the body. He spoke with deep feeling of "the bonds of Christian fellowship between the two great confederations of Congregational churches, which, though separated by the ocean, still preserve, in the absence of any formal bond of association, the most profound reverence for the memory of their common ecclesiastical ancestry, and an unshaken loyalty to those principles for which their fathers struggled so nobly."

The Committee appointed at the last session on the "valuable and exhaustive essay" on the Parish System brought in their report, "That societies thus organized to aid the church in secular affairs, but not controlling her spiritual interests or arrangements, may be important and valuable aids in building up the Redeemer's Kingdom in the world."

The failure to call councils to install pastors had been more and more manifest. The previous session had appointed a strong committee with Prof. Egbert C. Smyth as chairman to consider and report on "Ministerial Responsibility and Standing." Their report, prepared with great care, is by far the most comprehensive declaration upon the subject which at that time had been made. They conceived the problem before them to be: "First, how is standing in the Congregational ministry acquired? Second, how, under the Congregational polity, is ministerial responsibility maintained?" The ultimate decision was, that "the certification of ministerial standing by *local* ecclesiastical organizations is, in our judgment, a legitimate and timely provision for the protection and purity of the ministry."

As usual, statements of the several national societies were presented by accredited delegates having no votes.

Dakota sent a memorial calling attention to the increasing friction and discord in the Christian work among the Indians. Rev. Frederick A. Noble read a paper vividly showing the growing power of Mormonism and the pressing need for mission schools in the

Rocky Mountain region. "To go forward in our spiritual conquest of the New West by way of the Christian school is just now the most practicable of all methods," he declared. The committee to which the paper was referred reported later: "We heartily agree with its declaration that the evils are gigantic, the peril imminent, and the call for some speedy remedy urgent." "For more than a year," it was shown, the "New West Education Commission" had been organized. They also recommended that this new Society secure from the American Home Missionary Society "the hearty acceptance and vigorous prosecution of the special work for which the Commission has been organized." But should this plan fail, the new society was "heartily commended to the prayers and practical cooperation of the churches."

It is doubtless already apparent that this session was marked by the presentation of able papers which were to have far-reaching influence. Such a one was the exhaustive report, brought in by the representative committee appointed three years before, on "Pastorless Churches and Churchless Pastors."

In the response to the greetings sent by the Congregational Union of England and Wales, was included the prophetic hope, "that at an early day there may be arranged an International Congregational Conference to promote the general weal of the churches of our faith and order in all parts of the world."

In the afternoon of the Lord's Day, the members of the Council united with Pilgrim Church in the Lord's

Supper, administered by Rev. Edward Beecher of New York and Rev. George H. Atkinson of Oregon.

As, at the last session, memorials had been received voicing lack of confidence in the Council, so also several were presented at this session. They were referred to a committee, consisting of Revs. George Leon Walker, Constans L. Goodell, Samuel Wolcott and Deacon Chas. A. Richardson. Their report was adopted. "This Council has received with great respect the memorials . . . . and feels constrained to express its conviction that the existence of a National Council, under the present constitution and rules, is not only a safe and useful bond of fellowship among our churches, and a means of great possible benefit to them, but is an instrument vindicated in its employment, and by the churches generally approved.

"Second, this National Council, in the future as in the past, should welcome any suggestions which may promote its best efficiency."

"Blest be the tie that binds" was sung as a parting hymn. It expressed the rare fellowship in Christ which made memorable to all who were privileged to share in its blessings, the session held in Pilgrim Church in St. Louis.

THE "CONCORD" COUNCIL

The Fifth Session of the National Council, Held in Concord, New Hampshire, October 11—15, 1883.

Moderator, REV. ARTHUR LITTLE
Preacher, REV. F. A. NOBLE.

THE "CONCORD" COUNCIL

No session of the Council has ever been held under more unfavorable circumstances than the fifth, which convened Oct. 11, 1883, in the South Church in Concord, New Hampshire. Uncertainty prevailed, not only as to the time and place of meeting, but as to the gathering itself. Just where the blame must be placed need not now be discussed. At any rate, it is safe to say, the machinery did not run smoothly in preparation. The attendance was the smallest of all the sessions thus far. Only two hundred and thirty-two elected delegates presented themselves. But, what was of even greater moment, the convention was a provincial one to a degree. One hundred and forty-one, or considerably more than half, were from the six New England States.

After half an hour spent in devotional exercises, from nominations without remark, Rev. Arthur Little, of Illinois, was called to preside over the assembly as Moderator. Hon Samuel W. Hale, Governor of the Commonwealth, Edgar H. Woodman, Mayor of Concord, and Rev. Franklin D. Ayer, pastor of the First Church, gave addresses of welcome to the State and city. The organization was completed by the election of the necessary officers, among whom were the two assistant moderators, Frederick Billings of Vermont and Rev. Cushing Eells of Washington Territory.

The roll, as usual, included many of the prominent men of the pulpits and pews of our churches. Southern California was represented for the first time, sending Deacon M. H. Crafts of San Bernardino. The northern half of the State commissioned Rev. Thomas K. Noble of San Francisco. From out of the shadows of Pike's Peak came Rev. Warren F. Bickford of Manitou. The other Colorado delegate was Rev. E. P. Tenney of Colorado Springs. Dakota did remarkably well, being present in the persons of no less than five representatives.

Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, had only one messenger each. So also Utah, which sent Rev. Delavan L. Leonard of Salt Lake; Minnesota commissioned Rev. Charles E. Page of Crookston. Pennsylvania, Indiana and Oregon were not represented in the Council. Jonathan N. Harris, the philanthropic layman of New London, was elected by the General Conference of Connecticut; so also were Simeon E. Baldwin, the well-known jurist of New Haven, Rev. James W. Cooper of New Britain, and George W. Woodruff of Litchfield.

Iowa, always loyal to the Council, sent among others, Revs. George F. Magoun, William M. Brooks, William P. Bennett, Thomas G. Grassie, who was soon to take the helm of the Missionary Society in Wisconsin, Moses K. Cross and Charles Gibbs. Maine commissioned only three laymen among the twenty, John B. Bradbury of Waterville, Deacon Peter E. Vose, Dennysville, and George B. Barrows, Fryeburg. Massachusetts carried off the honors as usual with a delegation numbering an

even half-hundred, among whom were Rev. Henry M. Dexter, Deacon Samuel Johnson, the helper in all good works, Revs. S. Leroy Blake, Payson W. Lyman, Ezra Hoyt Byington, Smith Baker, George R. Leavitt and Willard G. Sperry, whom Olivet was to call later as president. An especially strong body of deacons went up to the conference, Samuel B. Capen, Henry M. Moore, James H. Dean, J. R. Carter and Lyman D. Thurston.

Michigan was honored in Deacon Byron McCutcheon, a future assistant moderator, and Philo Parsons, Esq., of Detroit. Among the clergy were Rev. A. Hastings Ross, W. W. Lyle, Moses Smith and Charles O. Brown. President Samuel C. Bartlett was at the head of the New Hampshire delegation, which was the largest the State had ever had in any session thus far held. Deacons Guilford Dudley, William B. Edwards and A. L. Judson came from the Empire State. Revs. C. C. Creegan, Samuel H. Virgin, William E. Park, William I. Chalmers and Henry L. Hubbell were of this party.

Vermont delegates did not have far to go, hence seventeen were present at this session, led by Rev. Henry Fairbanks, St. Johnsbury. David M. Camp, Newport, Stephen G. Butler, Essex, Joseph Poland, Montpelier, and Homer Goodhue, Westminster, were well known laymen who were present. Familiar names to many among the clergy were James G. Johnson, George E. Hall, Austin Hazen and Charles H. Merrill.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," were

the words of the text, found in 1 Peter 3: 18, from which the Rev. Frederick A. Noble of Chicago preached the Council sermon. "What I conceive to be the high and pressing business of the Church is, to bring men to God,—all classes and conditions of them to God. Any new interest or impulse in this service is an ample justification of any Christian gathering. Men may well come from the East and the West, from the North and from the South, and sit together in conference, and bow together in prayer, if they only go back again more intelligently and earnestly determined to do what in them lies to bring other men to God. Not a little remains for us in this direction. Our Congregational churches have indicated their loyalty to the primitive principles of the gospel; to liberty, to learning, to morality; to reforms, to missions; but it is an achievement still left us to stand unrivaled in going to the bottom of society, in reaching out into all classes and nationalities of society, and bringing them to God. What a sphere for earnestness! How becoming a high moral enthusiasm!"

Those who have attended several of the sessions of the Council have more than once expressed disappointment in the sermons preached before the assembled delegates from a broad continent. The realization has undoubtedly too often failed to attain the anticipation. The fame of the successful pastor of the large Union Park Church, Chicago, had preceded the preacher. Suffice it to say, in every respect, the occasion equaled to the full all expectations. Not a few regarded the sermon and the

devotional half-hours the rewarding blessings of the session in Concord.

Rev. A. H. Quint, the Secretary of the Council, reported 3,936 churches at date, a net increase of 262 churches in three years. Two thirds as many became extinct,—a fact which provoked an animated discussion. The membership was stated to be 387,619, indicating a net yearly increase since the last triennial gathering of 1,693. Ministers in good standing were reported to number 3,723, of whom 1,200 were without charge. "Our system is a most *wasteful* system, in the lack of facilities for putting together the sufficient number of ministers and the sufficient number of churches. We waste a *fourth* of our strength." The year-books cost the Council about $3,000 each year. A debt of over $2,000 was reported paid.

One of the most suggestive papers was read by Rev. George B. Spalding of Manchester, New Hampshire, on "The Relation of Children to the Church." An earnest and tender sympathy for childhood throughout the entire paper appealed to all.

A cordial salutation, written by Rev. Edward Everett Hale, was received from the Council of the Conference of Unitarian Churches in America: "Like yourselves, we are determined to maintain the freedom of the Congregational order; like yourselves, while retaining that freedom at home, we seek for organizations strong enough and compact enough for victory over the common enemy."

As usual, the representatives of the theological seminaries and the benevolent societies made statements indicating their conditions, needs and prospects.

The approaching fourth centennial of the birthday of Martin Luther received fitting recognition, the Council testifying "to its profound admiration of the man and his work, and to its desire to unite with all who devoutly recognize his eminent services to the Church of Christ, and to human welfare, in perpetuating his memory."

The education of the Indians was brought very forcibly before the conference in an earnest address by Rev. Joseph Ward. Resolutions favoring aggressive temperance legislation and work were passed. One of the strongest commendations ever given a national society was the following:—"That this National Council, in this, its fifth triennial session, earnestly renews its commendation of the work of the New West Education Commission, and urgently presses upon our churches the obligation to give to it that prayerful and hearty sympathy, and that prompt and generous financial support, which its past record, its present activity and future prospects entitle it to receive."

The Sunday services proved helpful and uplifting. In the First Church, at the usual hour of morning worship, the Moderator, Rev. Arthur Little, preached from Galatians 6: 14: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." At the close of the sermon the members of the Council united with the church in the Lord's Supper administered by Rev. Israel

P. Warren of Maine and Rev. Samuel Wolcott of Ohio. The pressing needs of disabled ministers, widows and orphans received careful attention.

A very valuable paper to all students of the history of our church was one entitled "Congregationalism in the Southern States," presented by Rev. M. E. Strieby. Virginia and South Carolina especially had a goodly share of Puritans among the early settlers and several churches of our order were established. Some of these organizations became strong and prosperous. Eventually, however, from various causes, all either died or were merged into other communions, save the famous Circular Church of Charleston, founded in 1690.

After the usual vote of thanks the Council adjourned without day.

THE "CHICAGO" COUNCIL

The Sixth Session of the National Council, Held in Chicago, Illinois, October 13—20, 1886.

Moderator, HON. L. A. COOKE.
Preacher, PROF. GEORGE P. FISHER.

THE "CHICAGO" COUNCIL

The churches of Chicago had invited the Council during the session sitting in Concord to hold their next meeting as their guests. The preparations were thorough and elaborate; the welcome most hearty. Three hundred and fifty-nine delegates, representing 4,300 churches, 4,000 ministers and 450,000 members gathered in Union Park Church at 10 A.M., Wednesday, October 13, 1886.

Samuel B. Capen of the Provisional Committee called the assembly to order; Rev. Smith Baker led in prayer. In the evening of the first day, the Council engaged in public worship with the Union Park Church. The Rev. Prof. George Park Fisher, the distinguished teacher of Church History in Yale University, had been requested to preach the sermon. He chose his text from Paul's first epistle to the Christians of Corinth, third chapter, eleventh verse: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The theme was "Catholicity, True and False." He declared the great apostle was "a living confutation of the idea that breadth is incompatible with fervor. Charity, you will hear it said, can only be gained at the expense of zeal: the secret of ardor is to see but one side. Listen to the marvelous words, coming from a man born and edu-

cated as he was: 'There is no distinction between Jew and Greek.' Plato, with all his spirituality, never soared to that height. He never rose to that extent above the pride of nationality. And it is plain, in the first place, that the catholicity of the apostle is not indifferentism. He does not tell the church that the creed is of no moment. He is no patron of the scornful type of agnosticism which Pontius Pilate represented, when with curling lip, he inquired, 'What is truth?' Secondly, it is evident, the apostle anticipated a growth of Christian theology and ethics beyond the elementary principles. The apostle thought poorly of that intellectual unrest which drove Athenians every day to the Agora in quest of some novel speculation,—to speak or to hear some new thing. Nor did he put a high estimate on the practical effect of Greek philosophical thought in saving men from atheism and immorality. But to a Christian philosophy, neither his time or mind nor anything in his writings indicates that he was averse.

"What is the one foundation? The answer of the apostle is brief. It is *Jesus Christ.* Notice that it is no abstraction. It is no theory of the universe, such as philosophy or natural religion might propound. It is a living person. To the Christians of the New Testament age, Jesus was a person as real as Peter or Paul. So, within the pale of the church, we need to bring home to the heart and imagination the living personality of Jesus; to think of him as one whose conscious, personal life and sympathetic heart are not less real to-day than

when he sat in the synagogue at Nazareth, or conversed with the disciples at the Last Supper. Where shall we look for the bond of fellowship among Christians? Not in any of the forms of church organization. You might as well identify the souls of your friends with the houses they live in. We Congregationalists ought to know how to cling to liberty, and at the same time to draw a line between liberty and license. We ought to know how to combine intellectual freedom with loyalty to the fundamental truth of the Gospel. Freedom and order are both ours by inheritance."

Upon the calling of the roll, it was at once apparent that there was an unusual proportion of men who had not before sat in the sessions of the Council. Arizona and New Mexico were represented for the first time, sending Revs. Charles B. Sumner and Thomas L. Gulick. Alabama sent two and Colorado four. The clerical party from Connecticut mustered an even score, among whom were Samuel M. Freeland, William H. Holman, Joseph H. Twichell, Burdett Hart, Graham Taylor, Joel S. Ives and Charles S. Brooks. Four crossed the continent to represent California. Dakota had recently witnessed extraordinary development, and commissioned Revs. David Wirt, A. A. Brown, Reuben A. Beard, Henry C. Simmons and Charles Seccombe. Rev. Russell T. Hall was the sole delegate from Florida. The General Association of Illinois placed first on the list Rev. J. C. Armstrong, the experienced Superintendent of the Chicago Missionary Society. Revs. William Windsor, Flavel

Bascom, John W. Bradshaw, Edward P. Goodwin, Warren F. Day, Edward F. Williams, Theodore Clifton and William A. Hobbs were his associates. J. L. Pickard, Nathan P. Dodge, David Burder, O. H. Lyon and Robert Wright were strong laymen who were delegates from Iowa. The growth of the Western States at this period is indicated by the fact that Kansas had fourteen men in the Council, whereas Maine sent but ten.

Massachusetts sent fifty-one, which exceeded by one the largest delegation the State had ever had in any previous session. It is noticeable, in examining the lists of the several Councils, that the Old Bay State has not practiced rotation to the degree the others have. Hence we find many familiar names,—Revs. H. M. Dexter, A. H. Quint, Henry A. Hazen and William D. Love.

William G. Puddefoot, who was later to take the United States for his parish, brought greetings from Michigan. From the same state also came Revs. Leroy Warren, Franklin Noble, A. Hastings Ross, William H. Davis and William H. Ryder.

Rev. Marcus W. Montgomery, the large-hearted bishop of the Scandinavians, and his successor in office, Rev. S. F. V. Fisher, were from the North Star State. Revs. William H. Medlar and Edward F. Noyes brought credentials from the North Pacific Conference.

Rev. James G. Merrill, since called to the presidency of Fisk University, hailed from Missouri—as did Revs. Henry Hopkins and George S. Ricker. Mississippi had two seats in the Council and Montana sent its first dele-

gate in Rev. S. A. Wallace. The Nebraska phalanx, containing among the preachers Harmon Bross, Willard Scott, George E. Albrecht and Edward H. Ashmun, was equal in numbers to the New Hampshire body which had Revs. George E. Street, George E. Hall, Samuel C. Bartlett and J. C. Rollins.

One marked characteristic of the session was that the proportion of laymen was the smallest of any so far held. Several of the leading laymen of the churches, however, were present, such as William H. Wanamaker and Alfred Wood from the New Jersey Association. New York has never shown much interest in the Council, but among the delegates to this session were Revs. Lyman Abbott, C. C. Creegan, William E. Park, William A. Robinson, George F. Pentecost and Samuel H. Virgin.

Rev. William S. Ament, who has since won renown in China, was in the Ohio party, among whom also were Revs. Josiah Strong, E. V. H. Danner, Julian M. Sturtevant, Washington Gladden and S. W. Meek. Oregon and Pennsylvania each sent two delegates. Three answered to their names from Rhode Island and Tennessee. Rev. George M. Sanborne traveled from Texas, Rev. Edward A. Benner from Utah and Rev. C. C. Otis from Washington. By vote of the last session the list of honorary members was very much increased, no less than fifty of this class being eligible to the privileges of the session.

The organization resulted in the election of Lorrin A. Cooke, of Connecticut, as Moderator. California con-

tributed one of the Assistant Moderators, Rev. J. K. McLean, and Tennessee the other, Rev. Benjamin A. Imes. A social feature, which left only happy memories, was a reception tendered the members of the Council by the Chicago Congregational Club in the First Church.

To review in the brief space at command the proceedings of this session is a difficult task indeed. So many and voluminous were the reports of the many committees that the minutes fill 386 pages, making a larger volume than the published record of any other session before or since. No complete index or thorough digest has ever been made. This task awaits some lover of the churches who is not afraid to work.

The last session, in Concord, had voiced its desire, in instructions to the Provisional Committee, "to give ample time for the consideration of subjects relating to the pastorate, the fellowship of the churches, and their practical work." Seven subjects came over, also, by reference to a standing committee. These were Sunday-School Work, Monument to John Robinson, The Pastorate and Ministerial Standing, Systematic Giving, Ministerial Relief, Indian Affairs and Accessions to the Churches. The Provisional Committee submitted an important report for approval, recommending six amendments to the By-laws and suggesting other changes in the administration of the conference. They made the gratifying announcement that the debt of over $3,000 against the Council had all been paid.

An unusual number of memorials were also presented;

some of them important, but the majority of ephemeral interest only. It was a time when the "Indian Question" was prominent in the public eye. Mormonism was rapidly gaining strength and showing more defiance. The New West Education Commission, therefore, was several times before the body. Up to this time, the Year Book had been compiled with reports taken at sixteen different dates during the year. A petition prayed that the statistical year might be made to conform with the calendar year and thus bring about uniformity and accuracy. The Enrichment of Worship also came before the session by petition. The olive branch of peace and fraternity was extended to the Free Baptists, from whom certain overtures had been received.

An organization, then five years old, which has since extended its beneficent influences into all lands, was officially noticed in the passing of the following resolution, "Resolved: That this Council looks with favor upon the work accomplished by the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor; recognizes the hand of Providence in bringing forward this method of Christian nurture; and commends it to the earnest consideration of the pastors and churches."

It was reported that "The Trustees of the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States" had been incorporated under the laws of Connecticut the previous winter. This act was ratified by the Council. The Committee on Ministerial Relief made a long and comprehensive report, which had much to do

with inciting in the hearts of all who heard it new zeal for the proper assistance of the veterans in the Master's service. The gift of $10,000 to this fund was reported from the estate of Mrs. Helen C. Knowles and due acknowledgment was made to the executors.

The preceding week a very memorable annual meeting of the American Board had been held in Des Moines. Many had come from the enthusiasm of the gathering to the Council. At any rate, this session held in Chicago is to be remembered for the prominence given evangelization. Rev. M. W. Montgomery aroused a large audience in urging eloquently the needs of the Scandinavians. City evangelism was as earnestly pleaded; and the very satisfactory results of the Chicago Missionary Society emphasized the plea. In this line was presented a paper, filling thirty pages of the published minutes, on "The Relation of the Congregational Churches to the Work of Evangelization" by Rev. George F. Pentecost. The theological seminaries and national benevolent societies all made statements as usual. Rev. Alonzo H. Quint had been asked to write upon the question, "How to Utilize our Ministerial Forces." The array of statistics presented, defining the constant waste in the practical application of our theory of church government, made a profound impression. One thousand one hundred and seventy ministers were without pastoral service and over one thousand churches had no shepherds. In ten years, 665 churches had been lost to the denomination, and during a period that witnessed remarkable develop-

ment in the country at large. "How to lessen the loss of time by intervals between pastorates," he declared a momentous problem worthy of the best thought of Congregationalism. After a review of the various polities of different communions, he unhesitatingly pronounces that of the Protestant Episcopal Church the best. The diocesan bishop is a conserving power, and in the office of the missionary superintendent in the Western States, we have what most nearly approaches him. The consideration of the theme had forced upon him the "inner aspect" as well as the "outer," the machinery of ecclesiasticism.

A resolution setting forth the increasing prevalence of divorce and deploring the evil resulting therefrom was offered and passed. It was also voted "That all titles be omitted except 'Rev.' 'Deacon,' and 'Professor' in making up the roll of the Council." By formal vote the importance of ecclesiastical councils for the installation of pastors was emphasized. A deliverance was also made, after long discussion, upon the subject of "Ministerial Standing." It was declared that it is acquired by the fulfilment of three conditions: namely, 1, membership in a Congregational Church; 2, ordination to the Christian ministry; and 3, "reception as an ordained minister into the fellowship of the Congregational Churches, in accordance with the usage of the state or territorial organization of churches in which the applicant may reside."

The Council instructed the Provisional Committee in future "to relegate, as far as practicable, the transaction

of business to the morning sessions, and devote the afternoon and evening sessions to the reading of papers, the presentation of reports, and discussions thereon." After the usual vote extending thanks to all who had had part in entertaining the Council, the following remarkable minute was ordered entered upon the records, "It is the desire of this Council to express its gratitude to Almighty God, for the spirit of seriousness and charity which have appeared in our proceedings." It was a fitting comment on the most enjoyable and profitable session the Council had thus far held. After prayer and benediction, the Moderator declared the sixth triennial session dissolved.

THE "WORCESTER" COUNCIL

The Seventh Session of the National Council, Held in Worcester, Massachusetts, October 9 — 14, 1889.

Moderator, PRESIDENT CYRUS NORTHROP,
Preacher, REV. PROF. ISRAEL E. DWINELL.

THE "WORCESTER" COUNCIL

Evangelism was the key-note of the last session in Chicago as spirituality had been of the one which had preceded it, held in Concord. This session was to leave an indelible impress because of the positive, unequivocal enunciation of the polity of the churches. As each session has been, so to speak, a sensitive plate upon which are left pictured the conditions, needs and aspirations of the denomination at the time, so in Worcester, through long debate, was evolved the doctrine which we believe will stand.

Hon. Lorrin A. Cooke of Connecticut called the seventh session of the National Council to order Wednesday morning, October 9, 1889, in Plymouth Church, Worcester, Mass. The membership of the churches in the United States had made a net gain of 57,000 since the last session and now numbered 475,608. There were 4,568 churches, a gain in the three years of 399, which was chiefly in the North Mississippi Valley States. The Sunday-schools had made, in that period, a gain of 72,-200 scholars, and the churches averaged 104 members each, an increase of four.

Cyrus Northrop, formerly a professor in Yale University, now president of the University of Minnesota, was chosen to preside over the deliberations of the session.

Missionaries "actually employed" in the service of the American Board were "invited to sit as honorary members" of the body.

At the Jubilee Meeting held in Melbourne, Victoria, resolutions were enthusiastically passed which were forwarded to the Congregational Union of England and Wales, calling for a "General Council representative of Congregationalism in all parts of the world" to be "convened in London, at as early date as possible." The overture was very heartily received in England, and by the Mother Country endorsed, and sent forth to all lands where our faith had taken root. Rev. Alexander Mackennal was commissioned to bear the above greeting and request to the Council. He most happily presented the salutations in an address of rare power. Before the close of the session, the Council appointed the necessary committees, empowering them to proceed with the preparations for the General Council. The result, as we know, was the First International Council of the Congregational Churches, held in London, July, 1891.

The several reports of the Treasurer, Auditor and Secretary indicated the finances and work of the Council to be in much better condition than at any time since organization. The evening of the opening day was made memorable by an address by Rev. Richard S. Storrs on the missionary work in foreign lands.

The attendance upon the session in Concord was marked by the large proportion of New England men. In Chicago, in 1886, the Western States were conspicu-

ous by their large representation. In this session, for the first time in the history of the Council, the South was to be prominent; not alone because of the number, but rather because of the controversy that arose over the principles which should govern representation, and the reception of contending delegations.

Rev. Henry S. De Forest, who had before brought the greetings of Alabama, again sat as a member from that State. Rev. L. H. Frary came from the orange groves of Southern California. Rev. Bela N. Seymour brought credentials from the Washington Conference of the District of Columbia. Revs. R. T. Hall and S. F. Gale, the veteran home missionary superintendent, were from Florida, which had had an era of development and prosperity. It is very noticeable in examining critically the roll of the Triennials from time to time that the lay delegates come almost wholly from the stronger states. Some of the states, in which our Communion is weak, have never been represented by laymen. This is a decided weakness of the Council, and violates an unwritten law at least of our polity. Connecticut chose from the pew Nathaniel Shipman, David N. Camp, Leonard J. Sandford, James H. Lindsey, Amasa Chandler and Samuel T. Dayton. Revs. J. E. Roy, E. A. Adams, G. S. F. Savage, F. A. Noble, N. H. Whittlesey, Charles L. Morgan and Stephen A. Norton were delegated to represent Illinois. Iowa gave credentials to a score of men, among whom were Nathan P. Dodge, George H. Lewis, J. B. Grinnell and Revs. George A. Gates, W. M.

Brooks, Alden B. Robbins, M. A. Holyoke and Ephraim Adams.

Revs. H. L. Hubbell and Cyrus I. Scofield, from Louisiana, joined hands with the Maine fraternity, Galen C. Moses, George T. Little, E. F. Duren, Peter E. Vose, James Graham and Revs. Frank T. Bayley, E. P. Wilson, Leavitt H. Hallock and Charles H. Pope. The Old Bay State again broke its magnificent record, this time sending sixty picked men. The General Association of the state selected, among a dozen, only one layman, James D. Pike. Mississippi's sole representative was the Rev. F. G. Woodworth, who has been so long the guiding spirit of the school at Tougaloo. Among the Minnesota brethren were Revs. C. F. Thwing, J. H. Morley, M. W. Montgomery, J. H. Chandler and E. M. Williams. Montana commissioned Superintendent Henry C. Simmons. The General Association of New Mexico and Arizona sent the Principal of New West Academy in Las Vegas, Rev. W. H. Ashley. Deacon Samuel Holmes, Revs. W. W. Patton and A. H. Bradford had come from New Jersey. Oregon and Washington were unrepresented; and Pennsylvania, whose representation in the Council has always been weak, sent but two. Rhode Island had four delegates, Tennessee two, Texas and Utah one each. An even score of able men hailed from Vermont, the strongest body the State had thus far sent to the Council. Revs. H. De F. Wiard, F. G. Appleton, R. H. Battey, David Beaton, W. B. Hubbard, who had served the Council before as Assistant Registrar and was to be hon-

ored by a reelection, W. S. Bell and W. B. D. Gray were from Dakota.

H. Clark Ford and Lucius F. Mellen, the energetic laymen of Cleveland, E. W. Metcalf, of Elyria, Walter A. Mahony, the wise counselor of Columbus, traveled from Ohio, and with them Revs. J. G. Fraser, Washington Gladden, S. B. Cooper, N. J. Morrison, Norman Plass and A. B. Cristy. The only woman to sit in the Council was Mrs. Sarah S. Fuller, from Wisconsin. She had a large escort in Revs. H. A. Miner, Judson Titsworth, Henry Faville, H. D. Porter, A. A. Berle, Luther Clapp and C. H. Richards.

A memorial from the Congregational churches of Connecticut, addressed "Mr. Moderator, Fathers and Brethren" was received and accepted, calling attention to the relations, (or rather lack of any), of the national benevolent societies to the churches. It was stated that "the facts not only discredit our polity, but also threaten our peace." That this anomalous state of affairs may be remedied, it was most emphatically declared that "the churches should participate directly in the management of the missionary work which they sustain." A committee of reference was appointed. In due time they brought in a report, embodying essentially the prayer of the memorial. It was unanimously passed. As one reads, again and again through the years, of the action of local, state and national assemblies making practically this same declaration, it is indeed most remarkable that the boards of administration should be so slow to accede

to the requests of the churches. Herein may lie one cause of the constantly recurring debts.

Interdenominational comity, relations with Free Baptists, and temperance were considered. The several benevolent societies and theological seminaries made reports, as usual, through their accredited delegates, who, according to the constitution, had every privilege of the Council, save that of voting.

Eight years before, the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor had had its modest beginning. Ten thousand societies were now enrolled under its banner for Christ and the Church. The President of the Society had been invited to prepare a paper upon "The Church and the Young." To its reading and the discussion following the session listened with absorbing interest. The writer held, first, that "the church must believe in the young and trust them." Secondly, that the church must show "outspoken devotion and loyalty to itself." And, lastly, "the church in caring for the young must provide for them regular and definite work." He then proceeded to affirm that the well known Society of which he was the acknowledged chief fulfilled these conditions.

Prof. Hugh M. Scott of Chicago Seminary, with the words "There is great need of more ministers to preach the gospel," prefaced a paper which fills thirty full pages of the published "minutes" on "The Need and Importance of an Increase in the Supply of Ministers." It was a stirring appeal, to the pastors especially, to raise up volunteers to be their own successors.

The John Robinson Memorial Committee reported progress, and was continued. A resolution conveying congratulations to the Congregationalists of Great Britain on the opening of Mansfield College, Oxford, England, was passed, and ordered cabled to the Rev. Charles Ray Palmer of Bridgeport, Conn., who was commissioned to present the same to the authorities of the new institution. Sociology as a science had won merited recognition in the schools and the press. It is not surprising, therefore, that Rev. Washington Gladden was requested to prepare a paper on "Christian Socialism." Brief quotation necessarily does injustice to a discourse that held the closest attention of the session for half an hour. "It begins to be clear that Christianity is not individualism, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' said Jesus the Christ. Some foundation there surely is for the claim that Christianity is socialistic in its tendencies. Socialism is simply the extension of the functions of the State so that it shall cover all departments of industry. Especially ought we to favor State action whose purpose it is to improve the condition of the poorest and least fortunate. But it is not the business of the State to relieve its citizens of the cares and responsibilities of life. That would be fatal charity. Room must be left for individual initiative and development of character."

For the second time the resolution was passed requesting the benevolent societies to unite in publishing *one* periodical. Work among the Germans was presented in

a way that appealed to all hearts. The religious needs of the Army and Navy of the United States were presented and a committee appointed to report at the next session. Prison Reform had a place in the program, as did the growing evil of the parochial schools of the Roman Church. City evangelization, marriage and divorce received the attention their importance deserves.

The Council Sunday brought a feast of good things. In the morning worship, Rev. Arthur Little delivered an address on the home field from Luke 19: 42, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." After the sermon the delegates united with the members of the church in the Lord's Supper.

In the evening service, the Rev. Israel E. Dwinell preached the Council sermon. The speaker had gone from pastorates in New England, which God had blessed, to the church in Sacramento, California. After a long, prayerful service there, in 1884 he entered upon his duties as one of the three professors in Pacific Theological Seminary, the only school of the prophets, of our order, west of Chicago. Isaiah 55 : 4 furnished the text, "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples." It set forth the matchless companionship and leadership of Jesus. "Our text presents Christ as the organizing power of society. It does not give a result which was reached and ended at a particular time. Rather it describes a

process that was to go on. We are in it." Jesus was first a witness to the people, secondly, a leader of the people, and, thirdly, a commander of the people. The crisis through which the country was passing, brought about by the astonishing expansion of the West, was dwelt upon. The Gospel alone can save. Our proper use of money conditions the result. And he closed by a fervid appeal to magnify the influence and work of the Holy Spirit.

The supreme question thrust upon this session was the color line in the South. Delegates from contending ecclesiastical bodies appeared, bearing their several credentials. A decision was challenged. A very long and at times acrimonious debate followed. Probably no question heretofore before any session had ever aroused so much fire. It burst out almost every day. For our present purpose, it is far too long to quote. Fortunately for the student of church polity, a complete stenographic report was made by the correspondent of the New York "Independent," and it thus appears in the issue of that journal for October 17, 1889. New conferences, representing fifty churches in Georgia, which had recently joined the denomination, sent delegates. Others came from an older body claiming to be the State Association. The entire matter was referred to a committee of fifteen, which gave patient hearing to all sides. They brought in a unanimous report, which was, with slight amendment, adopted. It declared that no organization could be recognized by the Council which made any distinction on

the ground of race or color. The delegates from the new churches, who were admitted, pledged themselves to this principle.

After the usual expressions of courtesy, the doxology was sung, the benediction pronounced and the seventh triennial session was dissolved.

THE "MINNEAPOLIS" COUNCIL

The Eighth Session of the National Council, Held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 12—17, 1892.

Moderator, REV. ALONZO H. QUINT.
Preacher, REV. CHARLES M. LAMSON.

THE "MINNEAPOLIS" COUNCIL

The Flour City welcomed the Council to Plymouth Church, Wednesday, October 12, 1892. Rev. George H. Wells, the pastor, and a large committee had made all necessary arrangements. Three hundred and sixty-one delegates reported. Of these only sixty-three were laymen and thirty honorary members. Rev. A. H. Quint, who had earnestly supported the Council from the beginning, and had been present as a delegate at every session, was elected moderator. It was an honor worthily bestowed. Very appropriately he might be called the Father of the Council. Hon. Byron McCutcheon, a distinguished member of the House of Representatives, and Rev. George C. Rowe of South Carolina, an honored member of the African race, were elected Assistant Moderators. Rev. W. H. Moore, who had so long served efficiently as Registrar, was re-elected. As his assistant the writer was chosen. Upon him developed the keeping of the minutes, and by this experience he learned something of the machinery involved in the running of the convention.

In the evening of the first day, public worship was held. Rev. William A. Robinson, of New York, conducted the opening services. Rev. Charles M. Lamson, of Vermont, preached the Council sermon from Matthew

23: 8, "For one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." The theme, "The Church, a Covenant with a Purpose," was presented with the well known ability of the preacher. "All Christians are under orders and therefore must keep in order. Christ is their authority and brotherhood in love and service, the proof and consequence of their obedience. Our church, rightly understood, is not a sect but a union, striving for the ideal of human unity. It is fraternity through loyalty; democracy, but democracy with a King. The tendency of life to-day is toward the definition, assertion and protection of the social man. The philosophy and religion of other ages have given themselves to the declaration of individual qualities and rights. The National Council is the formal and evident declaration of our covenant. It is our independency confessing that it can only realize itself in fraternity. It is the dignified and solemn acknowledgment of our mutual obligations to each other, and of our common obligations to all men. Fraternity with a purpose outward is the completion and security of the individualism of the churches. Our fellowship is the necessary utterance of our independence and the bonds of our covenant are the securities of our liberty. Here is our altar, here we are made one in Christ and in the duties Christ creates and commands. The Council is our declaration of the sacred authority of the unity of the Church. This unity is not prudential but vital; not formal but organic."

The attendance upon the several sessions had varied

much. 463 were present as delegates at Albany in 1852; and in June, 1865, the number reached 502. It will be recalled that the first regular triennial session, held in Oberlin in November, 1871, was composed of 276 delegates. In the Minneapolis session, as was to be expected, the West was largely represented.

Rev. Stephen C. McDaniel, who has written the history of the Congregational Methodist Churches, which came over almost in a body to us, was present from the Houston Conference in Alabama, with three others from the same state. James L. Barker, the large-hearted layman of Berkeley, came with the party from California. Three ministers, Revs. George E. Paddock, Henry E. Thayer and Samuel F. Dickinson, journeyed from Colorado. The pew in Connecticut was in evidence in Edward W. Marsh, Lucius R. Hazen, Thomas E. Merwin and Hezekiah L. Reade. Rev. Newman Smyth, Thomas K. Noble, Charles R. Palmer, John G. Davenport and Henry G. Marshall were among the number from the pulpit. Rev. Charles H. Small hailed from the District of Columbia. Chicago Association elected Revs. M. W. Montgomery, F. A. Noble, Quincy L. Dowd, besides Prof. Samuel I. Curtiss, William E. Hale and the well known lawyer, Edward D. Redington. Among the experienced pastors, also from Illinois, were Revs. Walter M. Barrows, C. A. Blanchard, Warren F. Day, Henry A. Bushnell and Julian M. Sturtevant. Few men have been commissioned so frequently as the last mentioned.

Indiana chose four ministers as delegates, Revs. N. A. Hyde, John H. Crum, Edward D. Curtis and Dwight P. Breed. Iowa had thirty-two votes in this session, whereas Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Oregon had only two each. The pioneer, Rev. Richard Cordley, was among the even dozen sitting for Kansas. Rev. John W. Whittaker was the sole messenger from Louisiana, as was Rev. Frank G. Woodworth from Mississippi. All the way from Maine came Revs. Jonathan E. Adams, Leavitt H. Hallock, James G. Merrill, Charles A. Pope, Henry L. Griffin and Charles F. Clark. The one layman, Galen C. Moses, must not be omitted. Among the Massachusetts delegates were many well known preachers: Revs. A. H. Quint, Charles E. Jefferson, Morton Dexter, DeWitt S. Clark, F. B. Makepeace, O. S. Dean, A. E. Dunning, Ernest W. Shurtleff, Wolcott Calkins and Arthur Little.

Michigan never before had been so largely and ably represented. Revs. H. P. DeForest, Dan F. Bradley, Edwin S. Shaw, Jay N. Taft and A. Hastings Ross were of the number. Minnesota chose two of her princely laymen, Charles W. Hackett, an honored business man of St. Paul, and Charles H. Woods, the distinguished lawyer of Minneapolis. From the clerics of the State were Revs. Smith Baker, S. J. Rogers, John W. Frizzelle, Henry M. Herrick, John W. Hargrave and Lucian M. Chaney. Rev. Charles A. Wight was commissioned by the St. Louis Association, having as confreres from Missouri Revs. Henry Hopkins, John H. Williams, E. C.

Evans and Albert Bushnell. Oklahoma took a seat in the Council for the first time in the person of the veteran superintendent of missions, Rev. Franklin B. Doe. North Carolina and Montana were without representation. Revs. Harmon Bross, F. L. Ferguson and George E. Taylor were among the guests from the plains of Nebraska. New York had a much larger company present than usual. Revs. Ethan Curtis, W. A. Robinson, Frank S. Fitch, F. A. Hatch, E. N. Packard, William E. Park, Samuel H. Virgin, E. B. Burrows, J. J. Hough and William H. Scudder are all known beyond the limits of the Empire State. North and South Dakota together sent more than twenty. This indicates how rapid had been the development of those great empires of the Northwest.

Ohio was represented by the oldest delegate who had ever sat in any session of the Council, Hon. Lester Taylor, aged ninety-four. He was escorted to the platform and introduced to the brethren. Edward J. Goodrich, the influential layman of Oberlin, and William H. Upson, the honored philanthropist of Akron, were of this goodly company, which also included Revs. C. E. Dickinson, Charles S. Mills, John R. Nichols, John W. Simpson, John G. Fraser and O. D. Fisher. President Erastus M. Cravath, whom we must always associate with the building up of Fisk University, came from Tennessee. His companion, very appropriately, was our brother in black, Rev. Joseph E. Smith. Two leaders in the Mormon kingdom, the Revs. J. Brainard Thrall and Winfield

S. Hawkes, were from Utah. Revs. James F. Eaton, Wallace Nutting, Thomas Sims and S. B. L. Penrose constituted by far the largest delegation Washington had ever commissioned. Wyoming cast but two votes in this session. Wisconsin, headed by Rev. Judson Titsworth, mustered sixteen in the ballot.

"In the Cross of Christ I glory" has always been a popular hymn in the sessions of the Council. It is of the written constitution of the body that the daily sessions should be opened by invoking the guidance and blessing of God. Praise follows prayer naturally, and, so it happens, in many of the sessions, the worship of the brethren has left abiding influences. The Secretary made his triennial report, stating that in the compilation of the Year Book all statistics now conform with the calendar year. The churches have reached the full number five thousand, a net gain of 417 since the brethren gathered in Worcester in 1889. But one sad feature, so often repeated, is the loss of one hundred churches *each* year. The membership has risen to 525,000; Illinois showing the largest number gained in the three years, 4,892. But the greatest proportionate increase was in Washington. One significant item was the gain noted in infant baptism, principally in the West. The Interior makes the best record in Sunday-schools, 625,975 being enrolled in the entire country. The greatest increase was among the Young People's Societies, now counting 145,000 members. Remembering that our denomination has increased from 850 churches in 1800, not fifty of them out

of New England, to the present strength, when the sum annually raised for the support of religion reaches more than six millions of dollars, and the average benevolent contributions yearly per member have risen to $4.52, there is much for which we should be grateful.

The trustees of the Council, in their report, made the gratifying announcement that the funds had increased to $25,000. The perennial subject of "Ministerial Standing" was presented and discussed; so also were the surprising growth of secret societies, the aggressive attitude of Mormonism and the need of wise temperance legislation.

The theological seminaries and national benevolent societies made their usual exhibits through their chosen representatives. It was ascertained that there were 950 Sunday-schools, in which were 45,000 members, under the care and supervision of our societies, and yet not connected with churches. Hereafter, it was ordered that they have a place in the Year Book. The Columbian Exposition was recognized and a committee was appointed with power to act. A paper on "Systematic Beneficence" stimulated all by a suggestive array of statistics, and, at the close, a resolution was moved and passed urging the churches to "contribute regularly to each one of the societies, and, so far as possible, something from every individual member."

The delegation from the Council to the International Council, held in London, the year previous, made their report. Four of the number, originally named, were pre-

vented by death from fulfilling the service: Frederick Billings, Caleb F. Gates, the Rev. Israel E. Dwinell, the beloved preacher before the last session, and Henry M. Dexter, so long our unmitered bishop in the editor's chair of The Congregationalist. Since the conference in London three members of the committee, widely known for their good works, have also passed to the beyond: Rev. Alfred H. Hall of Connecticut, Prof. Joseph H. Benton of Pacific Theological Seminary, and Prof. Lewis F. Stearns who delighted our English brethren with his paper, "Trend of Religious Thought." Of the report on the Council in London, we must quote at least one paragraph: "The papers and discussions were of a high order, and worthy of the occasion. But the great value of the Council was in its practical expression of our world-wide fellowship. The power of this was felt by all. Degrees of latitude shrank to small proportions when Congregational followers of the Master joined hands from America, Australia, Great Britain, Africa, Japan, Sweden and many lands. Our common problems and peculiar difficulties are understood, and we can join forces for a united advance, as never before, in all our activities."

The committee originally appointed in Concord to erect in Leyden, Holland, a suitable memorial to John Robinson, made their final report. The memorial took the form of a beautiful bronze tablet, which was placed upon the exterior of St. Peter's Church, and unveiled before a large concourse, composed of the members of the International Council, who had repaired to Leyden for

the purpose. The sum of $500 unexpended was voted toward the erection of the John Robinson Memorial Church in Gloucester, England.

Marriage and Divorce, Prison Reform, The Army and Navy of the United States, were presented in papers and reports. Church History Societies were commended: "We recommend the organization of such societies as far as practicable in all our states." Observance of the Sabbath also was before the house. A declaration was made favoring the general federation of all Christian denominations on a basis of mutual respect and Catholic evangelism.

In every session, there has generally been one topic uppermost in the minds of the delegates—one subject into which is poured the experiences of the men who have come from so widely separated regions. There was one such in the present session, which overshadowed all others. The relation of the benevolent societies to the churches which sustain them, and, secondly, the relations of these societies to each other, were the problems of supreme interest in Minneapolis. Long years they had been bones of contention. The time had come in all minds when a thorough understanding could no longer be delayed. Several committees brought in reports. The prolonged agitation in the American Board had permanently crippled the society, in that men had been alienated, who would probably never return to hearty allegiance to the support of the Board. There was a danger that this feeling might spread. In fact, it was spreading.

No less than eighteen state associations had by formal vote requested a change. These votes expressed the wishes of seventy-two per cent of the churches and seventy-nine per cent of the membership.

Federation was the cry heard on all sides. The way was opened for immediate action by a declaration from the directors of the New West Education Commission and the American College and Education Society, expressing a desire to unite. After prolonged and exciting debate, resolutions were passed almost unanimously. Thus a question which had been unanswered definitely for many years, and had caused anxiety and discord, was very clearly settled; namely, that the churches henceforth would do their missionary and educational work only through societies and agents over which they had control. "The Congregationalist," in speaking editorially at the time of this action says: "We doubt if any three hours in the history of Congregational churches in America have ever marked so great progress." The "Advance," "Pacific" and "Northwestern Congregationalist" spoke in the same vein.

Two delegates from the Congregational Union of England and Wales, T. W. Harrison, Esq., of Northwood, Hanley, and Rev. John Brown, of Bedford, were present. Moderator Quint's brief speech of welcome was replete with wit and wisdom, and the replies of the distinguished visitors were equally felicitous. Mr. Harrison spoke of the increasing regard of Englishmen for America. He thought we failed to a larger degree in

getting hold of the laboring classes. Dr. Brown's allusions to Gladstone were received with unbounded enthusiasm, and in the fervor of a Bunyan, whose successor he is, he plead for an exaltation of the Christ and an emphasis upon the eternal verities.

The minutes were revised and approved, the usual resolutions expressing gratitude were passed: "As we part, we shall carry with us pleasant memories of the days spent in these homes and in this beautiful city." Prayer was offered by Rev. Erastus M. Cravath of Tennessee, the benediction was pronounced by the Moderator, and the eighth triennial session was closed.

THE "SYRACUSE" COUNCIL

The Ninth Session of the National Council, Held in Syracuse, New York, October 9 — 14, 1895.

Moderator, HON. NELSON DINGLEY.
Preacher, REV. F. W. GUNSAULUS.

THE "SYRACUSE" COUNCIL

The Minneapolis session undoubtedly did a great work for the churches—a work that time has proved was of untold value—in that the relations, necessarily intimate and dependent, existing between the churches and the benevolent societies, and between the societies themselves, were satisfactorily defined and adjusted. But the last session was, nevertheless, a weak one. The papers and discussions were far below the high level attained in Worcester in 1889, in St. Louis in 1880, or in New Haven in 1874. Nor were the spiritual qualities equal to the Concord session in 1883.

The welcome accorded the Council by Syracuse was certainly warm and decidedly unique. The old railway station had been vacated only the day before when the train from Boston bearing the coming Moderator, and at the same time one from Chicago conveying the Western delegations, approached the city. Just at this very hour, the old structure yielded to spontaneous combustion and went up in a most stupendous blaze. Not the most brilliant pyrotechnics of the Council's most renowned orators ever equalled this surprising illumination.

The Council never before had met in the Empire State. Wednesday, October 9, 1895, the snow was falling in scattered flakes, when the Moderator of 1892 called the session to order in Plymouth Church, Syracuse. Rev. E.

N. Packard, in extending the formal welcome, reminded the delegates that the first session of the Creed Commission was held in the church. To this address Rev. A. H. Quint very happily replied. Hon. Nelson Dingley of Maine, the leader of the Republican Party on the floor of the House of Representatives, was unanimously chosen Moderator. To San Francisco the Council went for first Assistant Moderator, Rev. C. O. Brown; New Orleans furnished the second in the person of Prof. George W. Henderson of Straight University.

With the exception of the phenomenal Chicago session, this was the largest of all, three hundred and seventy being registered. Seventy-two were laymen. The component elements exhibited every variety of our membership. It was a representative gathering indeed. Metropolitan pastors and frontier missionaries, college presidents and inconspicuous laymen, distinguished lawyers and merchant princes, mingled with obscure laborers in the Lord's vineyard. The young men were not so numerous as in Minneapolis or Chicago. Florida sent as many men as did New Jersey. The delegations of Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana were as large as the body sent by Rhode Island. No woman was commissioned. With the exception of Massachusetts, New England was not largely represented. The Interior States cast the largest number of votes proportionately.

The retiring Moderator, for the first time in the history of the Council, gave an address. In the Congregational Union of England and Wales, which meets twice

annually, this feature has long been a conspicuous and influential factor. Dr. Quint, quite naturally, reverted to the experiences in the early sessions, and called to mind the honored men of God, whose faith and labors had made the Council a possibility and a success. In closing, he eloquently said, "We find our duty and privilege in the Christian nurture of children; in Christian education by Christian schools; in thorough training for the ministry of Christ; in providing the preaching of the Word for destitute places and the erection of houses of worship for homeless churches; in touching the needs of cities with Christian hands; in the uplifting of races who cry for help, and in sending out heroic missionaries of the cross to all parts of the world. What Congregationalism signifies to us is the absolute supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ; the equality of all Christians in their relation to him; the responsibility and discipline of brotherhood in government. The Pilgrim principle of a spiritual kingdom, free and unshackled, carried forward by spiritual forces, and dependent upon the divine power vouchsafed to a willing church, is the hope and prophecy of victory." Great truths, forcibly put, are these. The Council was to see Dr. Quint's face and hear his voice no more. Thirteen months later, at the age of sixty-eight, he died suddenly, surrounded by loving friends.

Constitutional questions were again debated, and amendments previously proposed were adopted, making the secretary, registrar and treasurer full members of the Council. Another amendment, providing that the

Council meet annually, was indefinitely postponed. Still another, changing the name to "The Congregational Union of the United States," though it had prominent men as advocates, was overwhelmingly rejected.

The Trustees were able to make the gratifying report that the assets had increased to the sum of $81,580.00. The committee on Ministerial Relief also submitted a report, indicating a very decided advance in the work because of the efficient labors of Rev. N. H. Whittlesey.

The committee appointed at the previous session to prepare "A Manual of Congregationalism" brought in their report, which was accepted and adopted substantially as presented. Much thought, care and time had been given to this work. It has never received the recognition in the East, that its merit deserves. Brief reviews are made of the history and polity of the churches. Then follow chapters on the accustomed methods employed in the organization of Congregational churches. By-laws and statements of doctrine naturally follow. Forms for admission of members and letters-missive are also included.

The Secretary's report, which is now looked forward to eagerly at each triennial session, was a graphic picture of the three years past. When the session closed in Minneapolis, three years before, the coming financial storm was just appearing. The net gain in that period had been 356 churches, or 119 each year. The number added on confession in the period had been 104,879, and the total benevolent contributions over seven million dollars, or

exactly $4.22 per member yearly. The total assets of the denomination amounted to more than fifty million dollars. Of the churches reporting salaries, the average had arisen to $1,125.00. It was regarded as a most encouraging document by the session.

The fame of the great pulpit orator of Chicago had taken possession of Syracuse. Before the close of the afternoon session, Wednesday, the people began pouring into the church. When the Rev. James B. Gregg rose to offer prayer every nook and corner was occupied. Would the result equal the anticipation? The delivery of the sermon occupied just an hour. Contrary to his usual custom, the preacher read from manuscript. "Babel and Pentecost" was the striking and suggestive title. Ample vocabulary, luminous illustrations, bold, epigrammatic sentences, all expressed in a classic literary style, marked the strong thinking of this remarkable effort. When Dr. Gunsaulus closed his discourse, one and all felt that they had been intellectually quickened and spiritually blessed. He had brought honor to the Council and sustained the best traditions of the Pilgrim pulpit.

It was in keeping with the qualities of this memorable session that the Rev. James Brand, so long the beloved pastor of the large church in Oberlin, should read a paper on "Present Day Preaching." Few nobler specimens of the traditional divine have our churches had than this grave, dignified theologian, who welcomed the gifts of the new learning and yet held firmly to the old gospel of redeeming grace.

He began by quoting the remark of a famous preacher, "The first duty of the preacher is to make men listen. Modernity is important. My first duty, therefore, is to try to discover the religious characteristics of the age in which we live. Real preaching, which has understanding of the times, is not losing its power. Our time is marked by certain serious defects; a feeble and superficial conception of the nature and government of God, and a consequent weakening of the religious sentiment; a loss of reverence for law and righteousness; a tendency to action rather than worship; a decay of the sense of the guilt of sin; a timidity of preachers in declaring the consequences of sin; a heavy emphasis on environment and a light one on personal responsibility." He closed a paper which must ever be accorded a high place among the many presented in the different sessions of the Council, by saying: "If we can become better Christians, we shall become better preachers."

The moderator presented Rev. George S. Barrett, delegate from the Congregational Union of England and Wales. The large audience sprang to its feet, waved handkerchiefs and cheered to the echo. It was a splendid exhibition of good feeling. "I bring the greetings of the mother country to its greater child," he said. "Our Congregational Zion embraces 4,800 churches. The most serious question confronting us is the sacramentarian party in the Established Church. The power of our churches lies in the truth which we preach and the lives which we live."

Rev. Edward Munson Hill, since called to the presidency of the Congregational College in Montreal, brought greetings from the Canadian sisterhood of churches. He spoke as an optimist on the future of the work of Christ in the Dominion.

Rev. Edward Hawes of Burlington, Vermont, read a strong paper on "The Right Conception of the Church." Although it was admitted that there was some reason for the harsh things currently said against the Church, he pronounced it "The grandest institution of the ages." He plead for a correct view of the real purpose of the Church:—"the inward regeneration of man."

In all previous sessions the presentation of the work and needs of the benevolent societies had been scattered through several days. In the midst of papers, reports, resolutions and routine business, this exceedingly important feature and duty had always been hampered. This year, an entire day, Friday, was given to the six societies. From ten in the morning until ten at night, the entranced listeners were "personally conducted" by "experienced guides" over and through the widely scattered fields occupied by our missionaries. The effect was magnificent beyond all expectation. Men who had attended for many years the separate meetings of the several societies declared emphatically that they had never known such a day of cumulative power. "The Advance" of current date, reporting the session, says, "The great prayers, the great longings, the great faith, the great sacrifices and the great heroisms were in evidence that day."

The French-American College was commended to the churches. The Armenian massacres received the attention of the session. Temperance, Whitman College and Secret Societies were also before the body and suitable action taken in each case. Arbitration, Marriage and Divorce, and Sunday Observance received attention. "The Methodists convert them, the Baptists wash them and the Congregationalists starch them," one clever delegate facetiously remarked in discussing "City Evangelism." The institutional church and deaconesses formed another topic. Of the former, Dr. Judson Titsworth declared it was the inevitable product of the actual conditions now prevailing in cities. The objection that its methods are not always spiritual was met by the assertion that everything that brings the kingdom of God to men is legitimate. It was suggested in debate that the institutional church unduly secularized religion. The answer came promptly that these churches show a larger proportion of members received on confession than others. Rev. C. S. Mills, who had built up a large church of this character in Cleveland, Ohio, followed in an admirable paper. He cited three facts as characteristic of the institutional church: namely, free pews, church buildings open every day, a most pronounced evangelistic spirit pervading all its work. When the debate was thrown open, the most spirited discussion of the session began between two giants, Dr. Meredith and Dr. Baker. The Rev. R. R. Meredith, pastor of the largest Congregational church in

the world, cogently protested against the use of the term "institutional church," and "so drawing a line between churches of Jesus Christ." The Rev. Smith Baker, equally ponderous and massive, as strenuously upheld the movement. It was a tussle of a pair of lions and the delighted spectators enjoyed it immensely. It was evident that each one of the valiant debaters was a large institution in himself. It was characteristic of the Council, that after prolonged and earnest discussion a satisfactory and amicable conclusion was reached. The session unanimously commended these churches in resolutions: "The National Council cordially endorses the general methods of these churches as susceptible of real and effective spiritual purpose, and welcomes them among the agencies which the Church of Christ may legitimately use in the great work of city evangelization."

The theological seminaries reported through their accredited delegates. These statements indicated that quite radical changes were being gradually introduced in the courses of study and the methods employed to give practical training to theological students.

Sunday was, as usual during the meeting of the Council, a day of rich blessings. Mr. Dwight Lyman Moody preached the sermon, on the Holy Spirit. It was a tender yet searching inquiry into our need, and withal prophetic of the rare fruitage which may be realized by each child of God, who seeks in Him his own exceeding great reward. The Lord's Supper followed the discourse. At the table the Revs. C. M. Lamson and Calvin Cutler of-

ficiated; ten lay members of the Council acting as deacons. All the pulpits of the city, save the Roman Catholic and the Episcopalian, were occupied by delegates to the session. In the afternoon, a "Good Government" meeting, which proved very popular with the citizens of Syracuse, was held. In the evening, Mr. Moody again spoke to a vast audience of men in the largest theater. Another service was held in the Plymouth Church, which proved equally attractive and stimulating. The theme was "The Hopeful Aspects of the Kingdom of God." Revs. Charles E. Jefferson, Willard Scott and William H. Davis were the forceful speakers.

In closing the session, the assistant moderator offered prayer, "Blest be the tie that binds" was sung, and the moderator declared the ninth session of the National Council dissolved.

THE "PORTLAND, OREGON" COUNCIL

The Tenth Session of the National Council, Held in Portland, Oregon, July 7—12, 1898.

Moderator, REV. F. A. NOBLE.
Preacher, REV. ALBERT J. LYMAN.

THE "PORTLAND, OREGON" COUNCIL

It was not without much hesitation that the Council decided to attempt to meet in a city so distant from the old Congregational centers as Portland, Oregon. The die, however, had been cast; and the usual committees had been working earnestly for months in anticipation of the opening day. It was feared, because of the time and expense required to journey so far, few would be present. It was, therefore, with much satisfaction that, when the session began, two hundred delegates were found to be present.

Thursday, July 7, 1898, in the First Church, Portland, the tenth session was called to order by Arthur H. Wellman, a distinguished member of the bar of Boston. The Hon. Nelson Dingley, the retiring moderator, because of pressing public duties in Washington, could not be present. Upon taking the chair, the temporary president called upon the Rev. William Salter, one of the two surviving members of the Iowa Band of fifty-five years before, to lead in prayer.

Proceeding to permanent organization, tellers were appointed, nominations were made, in accordance with custom without comment, and Rev. Frederick A. Noble, pastor of the Union Park Church, Chicago, was declared elected moderator. Rev. Amory H. Bradford of New

Jersey, who had received only a few less votes, escorted the successful candidate to the rostrum. Hon. O. V. Coffin, ex-governor of Connecticut, and the Rev. George C. Adams, pastor of the Old First Church, San Francisco, were chosen assistants.

Rev. A. W. Ackerman, pastor of the entertaining church, delivered the address of welcome. He reminded his hearers that this was the first gathering of representative Congregationalists ever held on the Pacific Coast, which now contained four hundred churches of our order, with three hundred and sixty ministers and thirty-six thousand members. Grateful mention was made of the brave pioneers whose rich legacies we had inherited. The response voiced the pleasure of the Council in being permitted to convene beside the wide Western Sea, to conserve and cherish the noble traditions of this great Empire of the West.

As was expected, the Western States were well represented. California sent nineteen; among the number, Judge Haven and R. H. Chamberlain of Oakland, Rev. J. T. Ford, the beloved pioneer of Southern California, Rev. H. E. Jewett, the veteran statistical secretary, Rev. W. W. Scudder, since called to superintend the missionary work in Washington. Oregon cast five votes, and Washington commissioned a baker's dozen, which included the well-known pastors, Revs. Samuel Greene, J. D. Jones, William Davies, S. M. Freeland, W. H. Scudder and W. C. Merritt.

Rev. Asher Anderson was placed by the General Con-

ference of Connecticut at the head of the delegation from that state. Revs. Joel S. Ives, C. M. Lamson, Charles Ray Palmer, Lewellyn Pratt and A. W. Hazen were of the party. This session was the least representative of all thus far held, and emphasizes the peril of meeting so far from denominational centers. Twelve states were entirely unrepresented. Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Montana, Texas and Utah had but one each. Two pastors brought the greetings of Colorado. Maine delegated Revs. J. G. Merrill, J. E. Warren and Miss Mary F. Farnham to bear the invitation to meet in Portland, Maine, in 1901. It was noticeable that the Mississippi Valley region was remarkably well represented. Proportionately, through the years, New England had lost; the Pacific Coast, until the present session, had not shown the increase in representation which the growth of the churches would seem to indicate probable; but the great prairie states of the Interior manifested decided gains. Is it because denominational consciousness was more pronounced there?

A. Lyman Williston, William C. Strong, Samuel B. Capen, G. Henry Whitcomb and Charles A. Hopkins were among the influential laymen who crossed the continent. Others from Massachusetts were Revs. Morton Dexter, G. R. W. Scott, Ezra H. Byington, W. E. Barton and Elijah Horr. Although the attendance upon this session was the smallest of all, the largest number of women, eight, were delegates to this meeting.

The provisional committee recommended several

changes in the rules, which were adopted later. The publishing committee reported that the present demands require an edition of 11,000 annually of the Year Book, which would thereafter be distributed mostly by express. Secretary Hazen's triennial report was especially valuable, and it proved to be the last he was to make. Feelingly he referred to the decease of his honored predecessor in office, Dr. Quint. The churches numbered 5,614, a net gain of 273 in the three years; 277 had ceased to exist in that time. The membership had increased to 625,864. Of this total the East had more than one-half, the Interior more than a third, and the West less than one-eighth. Sunday-schools, in the period, gained only 7,769 and the benevolences showed a decrease.

David N. Camp of Connecticut, who had served the Council acceptably for many years as auditor, again made his report upon the statement which had been submitted previously by Samuel B. Forbes, the treasurer. It indicated the increasing volume of business that the Council is called upon to perform, that the disbursements exceeded $42,000. The finance committee requested the churches to pay two cents per member annually hereafter. The trustees of the Council made the happy announcement that the fund for ministerial relief amounted to $109,000.

Rev. Charles Ray Palmer reported as committee of the Council on the John Robinson Memorial Church in Gainsborough, England. The site and edifice cost about $35,000. This church and the tablet in Leyden fittingly

commemorate the name of him who was indeed a father in Israel. Dr. Mackennal, delegate from the Congregational Union of England and Wales, addressed the house. The reception accorded him was both dramatic and most cordial, the audience rising with tumultuous applause. It was in keeping with the manner in which the Council's delegate, the Rev. Philip S. Moxom, had been received by the Union in London, in the spring.

The committee appointed to make suitable provision for the International Council the following year in Boston reported reasonable progress. Rev. A. H. Bradford at this point read a luminous paper on "The International Mission of Congregationalism." It was conceded that no one in America was better fitted by experience and sympathy than the speaker to write upon so broad a theme. "The days of denominationalism are numbered. The old style of Christian, who is sure of his sect but not sure whether he is a follower of Christ, has had his day and must cease to be. Yet there is another side to the subject. The Pilgrims had a mission in their day, and their children have a mission in the present. What is the international mission of Congregationalism? There is but one mission for any church, whatever its name, and that is the promotion of the kingdom of God."

The above naturally introduced the succeeding paper by the moderator, "Congregationalism in the Making of the Nation." This address also powerfully moved the audience. "Congregationalism is not the only important factor or influence which has entered into the shaping of

our nation. But it still remains to be said, that the ideas which underlie our Congregationalism and give to it the distinctive features which characterize its form and life have had a unique and traceable part in the making of our nation." He then proceeded to portray graphically the Puritan's regard for the equal rights of men and the necessity for constitutional government. The second half elaborated the influence which our churches have had on the public weal because of the schools, colleges and universities largely founded and sustained by our people.

Two papers were read, written by persons not present, on the temperance situation. The papers themselves were unobjectionable, but the feeling of the Council is shown in the passing at once of the resolution:—"That no more papers be read which have been prepared by persons not present." Divorce, gambling, secret societies and prison reform were all presented by reports from standing committees. Some of these committees had been standing so many years that it was a merciful act in the Council to discharge them from further service, and thereby relieve the docket of the future from the painful necessity of hearing twice-told tales.

Because of an abuse which had very evidently been growing, the Council, by amending a by-law, took drastic measures: "Every morning and evening shall be given to meetings of a specifically religious, rather than business, character." The general subject, "Ministerial Standing and Training" engaged attention through one

morning session. After long and earnest discussion, it was voted: "That to the resolutions on ministerial standing adopted in 1886, in Chicago, be added, 'That, in the transfer of ministerial membership . . . the gaining of new membership is ecclesiastically impossible until the applicant shall have been fully released from his previous ecclesiastical membership.'"

"Common Grounds of Belief for Christian Thinkers" was the title of a paper read by Rev. E. S. Hill, of Iowa. Prof. Henry C. King, of Oberlin, followed with an address upon the same vital subject. By far the longest paper presented to the session was by Samuel B. Capen of Boston, on "Modern Methods in Missionary Work." Some stimulating facts were made plain:—"The churches are increasing their gifts far out of proportion to the growth of population or to the total national wealth. The gifts to missions in 1880 were $8,000,000; in 1890, they were $14,000,000,—a growth far beyond that of population. In the last seventy years the income of the missionary societies has been multiplied twenty fold." The title was very misleading, as the paper did not deal at all with missionary work on the field, but, rather, the methods to be employed among the churches to secure the money necessary to carry forward the work at home and abroad. This paper later was widely distributed; and its wise suggestions have been put into general practice.

Several formal invitations had been extended to the Council to attend places and institutions. Only one was

accepted. Saturday afternoon, a special train carried five hundred passengers to Forest Grove, the site of Pacific University. The afternoon and evening all too quickly passed with receptions, speeches, music and a bountiful repast. A touching scene was the planting on the campus of a mayflower, carefully brought by the Council party from Massachusetts.

Sunday morning the Council convened for public worship. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Albert J. Lyman, pastor of the South Church, Brooklyn, New York; after which the delegates united with the church in the Lord's Supper. Dr. Lyman chose as his text, "He is our peace," Ephesians 2: 14; the theme being "The Spirit of Mediation in Modern Congregationalism." The spirit of harmony which pervaded the session gave a fitting setting to this wholesome message of good cheer and peace. Not only the theme of the sermon but the personality of the preacher accorded to a very rare degree with the tenor of the hour. "The glory of this powerful letter to the Ephesians is its Christology. The apostle is speaking, let us continue to remember, not of the primary mediation of Christ as between God and man, but of that secondary mediation, which through Christ is accomplished between different parties of men. Am I mistaken, honored brethren, to whom it is my high privilege to speak to-day, in believing that something of the spirit of a mediation not dissimilar is both the supreme need and the supreme note of modern Christendom; and that in this country the Congrega-

tional churches of America are peculiarly called in the providence of God to illustrate the spirit of such mediation in our time?"

These words, coming as they did from the nephew of Rev. Horace Lyman, the first pastor of the church in which the Council was assembled as guest, had peculiar weight and significance. In closing, this long-beloved pastor of Brooklyn exclaimed: "Christianity on its human side is comradeship raised to the level of consecration. Let us be marching men, not sitting too long by last night's camp-fires. God is with us, Christ is with us. This is the creed of the Christian; this the inspired optimism of St. Paul. 'For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.'"

Sunday evening, Rev. F. T. Bayley, of Colorado, and Rev. Alexander Mackennal, of England, spoke to a crowded house on Federation, which the first speaker declared to be the greatest present need of Protestantism. "Sects have sprung up like mushrooms on a dung-heap." A telegram conveying the greetings of the Council was sent to President McKinley; another to the churches of Hawaii, welcoming them to the brotherhood of the States, and expressing the hope that their messengers might be present as delegates in the future sessions.

A new subject in the sessions of the Council—the wonder is that it had not long ago been presented—"How to Save the Property of Disbanded Churches," was treated by Rev. I. W. Metcalf of Ohio. His paper teemed with

facts, some of them of amazing proportions. The property of the Congregational churches was stated to exceed fifty millions of dollars. But the financial losses have been astounding; in Connecticut, no less than a million dollars, "by neglect of business precautions." In the State of Michigan half of the Congregational churches organized have become extinct. Ohio has lost 162. All churches which are independent, the Baptist, Christian and Congregational, are especially liable to losses. How to secure property for the churches in perpetuity is the pressing problem. The writer called attention to the very large sums saved to the denomination by the practical business methods of the Church Building Society; and also it explained how efficiently the National Council might administer denominational trusts.

The color question, over which so many controversies had occurred in previous years, again came up in this session. The discussions, which were long, and at times very animated, can be found in full in stenographic reports of the Portland "Oregonian" of current dates. Suffice it to say, the white and colored churches in Alabama had failed to form one state association. Both sent delegates. The Council refused to receive either delegation, but permitted them to sit as honorary members. In other words, Alabama was plainly told to adjust her own difficulties.

A report presented by a committee on the American Bible Society provoked an interesting debate. It was evident that the Society had lost to a degree the full con-

fidence of a large majority of the Council. Resolutions were finally passed requesting the Society to use "great care in the selection of district agents" and to "publish as soon as practicable, an edition of the Bible in the Revised Version." "Inasmuch as this Society asks for the support of our churches, we respectfully request that it make annual statements covering a more detailed account of its assets, funds, receipts, and expenditures."

It was to be expected that the Council, in meeting for the first time in the Western half of the Continent, would give a due proportion of thought and time to retrospect. The pioneers had no past; history, precedent and tradition were still in the future. Now, after a little more than half a century, it was apparent that Congregationalism had reached self-consciousness. Too long, there had been Congregational churches scattered throughout these wide Pacific States without Congregationalism. One of the most profitable features of this session was the review of the work of our churches on the Pacific Coast. Secretary George M. Boynton of Boston wrote of the Sunday-schools of this great region. One of the most valuable papers to the student of the history of our churches ever prepared by the request of the Council was the one written by Rev. Myron Eells, "Religious Movements among the Indians of the Pacific Coast." In it are preserved data which could be found with the greatest difficulty, if at all, elsewhere.

Rev. William C. Kantner, pastor of the church in Salem, Oregon, read a carefully prepared paper, "The

Religious Movements on the Pacific Coast." The first Christian service held was conducted by the chaplain of an English vessel, June 24, 1579. What is called the Prayer-Book Cross, a beautiful memorial erected by George W. Childs, of Philadelphia, now marks the spot in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. From the beginning, he thus traced the growth of Christianity on the Coast down to the present, until the one has become a thousand. "There are now 65,000 Methodists, 35,000 Presbyterians, 31,000 Disciples, 30,000 Baptists and 28,000 Congregationalists in the three states, California, Oregon and Washington." Professor George Mooar, the beloved teacher for so many years in the Pacific Theological Seminary, Oakland, California, also read a paper on the same subject. The treatment was equally learned but very different, closing with the following prophetic words: "The movements on this side of the continent are yet to be greater than the pioneers dreamed, and only the learning which has the deep inspiration of our divine Lord is adequate to direct them."

The usual vote of thanks was heartily passed; the minutes were revised and approved. Rev. J. S. Griffin, ninety-one years of age, and pastor of the first Congregational church organized west of the Rocky Mountains, led in a fervent prayer and pronounced the benediction. The Moderator thereupon declared the tenth session of the National Council dissolved.

THE FUNCTION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

Salem Covenant 1636.

"Wee bynd ourselves to studdy the advancement of the Gospell in all truth and peace, both in regard of those that are within, or without, noe way sleighting our sister churches, but useing theire Counsell as need shalbe".

THE FUNCTION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

Congregationalism is the happy medium between two apparently irreconcilable principles, Independency and Presbyterianism. These long struggled for supremacy. In the very beginning of the history of the Pilgrim churches the latter seemed to be the stronger. Then followed a long period in which the former was in the ascendency. At present, some discern tendencies toward the earlier interpretations of polity. Congregationalism is a compromise found in the golden mean which happily conserves the best elements in both. Congregationalism cannot live without being free, and yet authority is essential to its life. The sovereignty of each single, local church is a prerequisite; and yet to maintain properly that sovereign authority fellowship with sister churches of the same faith and practice is necessary.

All Christians, for our present purposes, may be divided into two classes; namely, those who hold that Jesus, the Founder of Christianity, first instituted the Church, an ecclesiastical organization, simple, yet at the time complete in itself, and then went forth with his chosen companions to preach that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Second, those who believe that Christ, in

the beginning, proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to sinful men and the uniting of his disciples in the bonds of a new brotherhood naturally followed as a normal growth. Was the Church an end in itself or means to an end? Which did the Saviour regard of paramount importance, the Church or the work which the institution was to do?

Churchmen, however doctrinally "high" they may be, are forced to admit that the primitive organization of the Christian Church, whatever be its significance, was scarcely more than a voluntary fraternity. Brotherhood, possibly better than any other word we may use, defines its character. Officers there were none in the Apostolic company. True, to their beloved chief, loyalty was freely accorded. One also was chosen to carry the bag as treasurer. Equality in all their relations was very marked. They were brethren. Again, they were so fully taken up with what they conceived to be their supreme duty, evangelization, that little thought was apparently given to the external form of the union which their common purpose and love had unconsciously formed. The tragic death of Judas, the traitor, forced upon them the necessity of choosing a successor. In the election of Matthias, the pure democracy of the little group is plainly shown. Each one of the apostles had a voice and a vote in the result. But the formality was held strictly in abeyance. They believed whatever organization was necessary was a manifestation, not the cause of spiritual life. And in studying the New Testa-

ment, a portion of which these same men were to be inspired to write, we see that the Church, in its last analysis, was not the source of authority but its agent. Machinery has never generated energy; it expends energy and thus transmits power. Polity is not the cause of religious life, but its effect. A true church is a development, not a manufactured thing; it is an organism, not an organization.

The Acts of the Apostles, written by Luke, indicates that the early Christian churches were all local, and not diocesan, provincial or national. The believers in Christ in a community, town or city were the constituent elements in the new organization. It was, therefore, municipal, or limited to the confines of a neighborhood. In this, it found its prototype in the Jewish synagogue, after which the Christian Church in many respects was patterned. Each church was independent; and yet, so great was the need of fellowship because of weakness, it maintained communion with other similar churches. My honored teacher, Professor George Park Fisher, says in writing of this period in his well known work, "The Beginnings of Christianity," "While the churches did not attempt to govern one another, they held themselves at liberty to address to one another words of counsel and rebuke, as well as of comfort in affliction." He then cites the case of the epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians. The name of the author of this important letter does not appear at all. He writes from and for the Church in Rome of which he was pastor. It

was a letter from a church to a church. In this communication we read, "Receive our counsel and ye shall have no occasion of regret."

It is therefore very evident that the primitive, apostolic church chose its own pastor and officers, disciplined its own members and transacted its business independently, with no interference from without. But it is equally certain that each church entered into fellowship with other Christian churches; and in that communion received help and strength. This independency was manifest in varying degrees of autonomy; and the fellowship expressed itself in different forms. It may be seen in reading the annals of that distant age that there was always a party favoring the former; and with equal certainty we may say the latter was never without hearty support.

The parity of the ministry in the early churches is everywhere in evidence. The terms presbyter and bishop are synonymous. Each church had one or more pastors. In time, however, by virtue of age or ability, one presbyter was given certain preeminence. Churches established in growing centers of population also acquired an acknowledged power and ascendency. The stated and occasional gatherings of the churches, representative and otherwise, reflected the influences of these changing conditions. From a polity strictly Congregational in the beginning, the churches gradually passed under Presbyterian forms, and, later, to the Episcopalian, which became well-nigh universal at the close of the

first half of the second century. In the early churches the pastor was a bishop and there were as many bishops as there were pastors. In time the pastor of the leading church became the sole bishop. But it is to be noted that his function was strictly governmental, and the churches did not regard him as belonging to a higher class or a distinct order.

At the same time that the ministry was undergoing change, the meetings of the churches also were showing new forms and exercising new prerogatives. The councils held at Jerusalem were simple in their organization and yet fearless and outspoken in their deliverances. The age called for distinct enunciations upon the importance of sound doctrine, both in faith and practice. A hard and fixed line between the two could not always be clearly drawn. The founders of our church order were deeply concerned with the question, "What is the true polity of the Christian Church?" What powers are germane to its controlling principles? Each believer was held to be a priest and king; believers to constitute the church, which was to acknowledge the headship of Christ; and in religious duties all churches should be joined in prayerful communion. However difficult they found the detailed adjustment of the local church in its autonomy to the principle of fellowship, they never wavered in their belief in the truth and justice of the polity.

Dr. Dexter, in his suggestive monograph, "A Glance at the Ecclesiastical Councils of New England," says, "The first reference to such communion, in that modified form

which grew to what the Church of Rome knows by the name of Council, is believed to be found in a passage of Tertullian, in which, after reference to the powers of a bishop at that time, he adds that councils of churches were accustomed to be held among the nations of Greek descent for consultation upon matters of special import, and that their decisions were treated with the greatest respect." It was reserved for the great meetings of the early centuries, called councils, to examine, define and promulgate the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. There were very many of these memorable national and international gatherings. But only seven by the common consent of Christendom have been accorded the title ecumenical. These epoch-marking conclaves of the churches all had political as well as ecclesiastical significance. From the standpoint of the Church, the object was to promote Catholicity. From the standpoint of the State, the purpose was to obtain the support by the Government of the united Church. Only bishops voted in these assemblies convened by command of the Emperors.

The first, and in some respects the most important of all of these world-councils was called by Constantine to Nicæa in 325 A.D. The Arian controversy was the cause. The interest of Arius was primarily philosophical; that of Athanasius, his able opponent, religious. And the latter, though in the minority in the beginning, carried the convention with him, and we have the result in the creed which bears the name of the place of the meet-

ing. The second Council met fifty-six years later in Constantinople and reaffirmed the decisions of the former. The seventh and last bearing the name ecumenical also met at Nicæa, nearly five centuries after the first, or in 787. These eventful conventions of the princes of the Church left indelible impress upon the doctrine, polity and modes of worship. More than a thousand years have passed since the last ecumenical council was held, and, though the churches have suffered vicissitudes innumerable and have been oft divided, the decisions of these ancient councils still control the thought and labor of by far the greater portion of Christendom. It is no wonder, therefore, that the ages have invested these vast assemblies and their deliverances with a dignity and sanctity which are peculiarly their own. We may truly regret that at present, when a united Christianity would mean so much, not only to doctrine but to life, manifold divisions no longer make possible an ecumenical council of all Christian peoples. But the word and the expression of the faith of those ancient councils are not wholly lost.

There were many and heroic reformers before the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Single-handed and alone men arose who counted not their very lives as dear unto themselves if they might lead the churches to return to the primitive belief and practice of the early Gospel. Theirs was a hopeless battle against power entrenched in high places. Often they perished, not even leaving their names on the roll of martyrdom. At length

in 1517 came forward the monk of Wittenberg to nail his ninety-five theses on the door of the Church of All Saints. It was only a spark, but it kindled a mighty flame. The rebellion against the very imperialism that called the early councils into existence had begun. Faith and polity were both involved. But we sometimes forget that Luther was a political reformer and that if it had not been for the support of Frederick the Wise his efforts must have failed. It sheds much light upon the early history of Protestantism to remember that the support of the State was essential. And as purity of doctrine was sought first of all, rather than the ecclesiastical forms under and by which the faith was to be propagated, this political support was soon merged into union. Ecclesiastical forms were dependent upon political environment. Nationalism in religion was forced upon the reformers almost as a necessity. Wherever monarchical influence predominated, the churches took the form of Episcopacy. Wherever the democratic influence was supreme in the rule of the people, the ecclesiastical governments became Presbyterian and were thus in accord with the nation. In neither case did Luther, Zwingli and their confreres feel that their ideals of church polity had been attained. There were always radicals among the churches who openly declared that the Reformation had reformed only half the abuses of the churches. These voices were never silenced.

Only seven years after Luther had consigned the Bull of Pope Leo X to the flames in the market-place of Wit-

tenberg, Francis Lambert, a French exile, began preaching in Hesse a still greater reform. The principality had been profoundly moved already by the Reformation. Philip the Landgrave gave the new evangelist encouragement and protection. In a synod of the reformed churches assembled by this progressive ruler, Lambert had an opportunity to present personally his views and to publish among the attendants certain theses of his on church polity which had been printed only a short time before. His plan, based upon his studies of the New Testament, commended itself to the Synod. His polity contemplated "the formation of a pure congregation of true believers, in which the right of ecclesiastical self-government should be exercised immediately by the congregation. In the congregation of brethren or saints that may be organized, all church business is to be transacted." It thus called for a spiritual democracy, a self-governing church, complete in itself.

Other theses in the same platform made provision for a yearly synod or council, "composed of the assembled pastors and of delegates chosen immediately before in the church-meetings." Leonard Bacon writes, in his "Genesis of the New England Churches," of his carefully outlined church order: "The functions and powers of the Synod were defined in a remarkable accordance with the powers and functions of councils in the polity of the New England churches." Francis Lambert's platform of church government and order was the first exposition of modern Congregationalism. It is much to be re-

gretted that, although accepted by the Synod, when it was presented to the leaders of the reformed churches, they pronounced it ideal in theory but impracticable for the time. The author died two years after the Synod. It would be an interesting study for some thorough scholar, for it has never yet been done, to discover what influence, if any, Lambert had upon the Pilgrim reformers, who, two generations later, were to be his worthy successors.

The first half of the sixteenth century saw most momentous changes in England. Church as well as State shared in the general turmoil and upheaval. Henry VIII, "the first heir of the white and the red rose" came to the throne in 1509. The revival of learning was quickening all minds. The invention of printing made it possible for the first time for even the poor to read. The common people began to do their own thinking. To possess and study the Bible became no less than a passion in many hearts. Ecclesiastical supremacy had been shattered and in its place the Reformers put the Scriptures. It was a seed-sowing time for Protestantism. At the death of the many times married monarch, England was divided at home, friendless abroad; yet the power of the Pope had been overthrown, never to be fully re-established.

Edward VI also favored Protestantism, and he witnessed the establishment of the Prayer-book and the Forty-two Articles of Religion. Then came Bloody Mary, whose cruel persecutions checked only for a time

the reform. "Play the man, Ridley," said Latimer, as he stood in flames at the stake in Oxford; "we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out."

Never had the fortunes of Great Britain been at lower ebb than they were when Elizabeth ascended the throne in 1558. The nation was humiliated, the people crazed by the intolerance and corruption of the Court. The able Queen, who was to leave her name resplendent among all sovereigns of the world, sought at once to establish her rule, to keep from war, and to restore civil and religious order. The strain and stress were for a while past. It was a time to take breath. At first lenient toward all faiths, Elizabeth became more exacting; she restored the Prayer-book and enforced its use through the famous Act of Uniformity. The "Articles" were revised, and all the clergy were required to subscribe to them. She made the State supreme in all things; and not even religion was in any way to impair this supremacy. Her dislike to the Romanists was not due to her antagonism to their faith, but to the political hostility associated with their religion. If she did not encourage the Reformers, it was not always due to a lack of sympathy with their aims, but solely because she had misgivings as to the result of their success upon the political fabric of the kingdom. It mattered little to many what the sovereign was doing, for they were reading, thinking, praying as never before. The spirit of religion was taking absolute possession of men. The

whole temper of the nation was changed. A new conception of life with added moral impulse superseded the old. Spirituality worked downward and upward, leavening the entire social lump. Social equality was enforced upon even doubting minds by the teachings of the Gospel. All were brethren, because one was their Master, even Christ Jesus. The meanest peasant was exalted and ennobled as a child of God. The Puritan spirit found a voice in the noblest literature of all time when Milton sang in sublimest strains of the majesty of Jehovah.

It may seem at first glance a far cry from the bitter controversies of the closing years of Elizabeth's reign to the consideration of the order of church government in distant America. We forget that Congregationalism did not originate on this side the sea; rather did all the fundamental principles of our polity find their inception and earliest development in Europe. Consequently, he who would understand the function of the National Council must seek in the cradle of our denomination its early beginnings. England was an ecclesiastical storm-center at this period. The Established Church had lost the good will and respect of the people. Presbyterian forms had been officially recognized by political necessity, but Thomas Cartwright, notwithstanding his great learning, lost his opportunity because of his excessive intolerance. Calvinistic Presbyterianism was regarded as even more bigoted than Romanism. It remained for Richard Hooker in his "Ecclesiastical Polity," an epoch-marking book, to shatter the unreasonable assumptions

of the Geneva Reformers. Goaded to action by the distressing and divisive animosities of her subjects, among the last official acts of the Queen was the creation of the Ecclesiastical Commission, which became, under the notorious Laud, an instrument of untold cruelty and oppression. "All preaching and reading of the Bible in private houses were forbidden." Even printing in the kingdom was restricted to London. Notwithstanding this repression, the "Martin Marprelate" pamphlets were issued from a secret press, at the price, later, of the blood of their author upon the scaffold.

The reforming spirit continued to spread; and on the accession of James the First, eight hundred ministers, one-tenth of all in the kingdom, waited upon his Majesty and presented him the "Millenary Petition," requesting reform. But James had no real sympathy with reform in the Church. Persistently he clung to his pet theory, the divine right of kings, and the religious interests of his people were of very inconsiderable concern. The immorality of his court was no more repugnant than the folly of his rule. The time had come when his subjects could no longer endure conformity with his unjust laws. Those who would worship God in accord with the dictates of conscience began to gather on the Lord's Day in separate "conventicles," as their meetings were contemptuously called by their enemies. The Puritan churches grew. In that word "grew" is summed up the leading characteristic of these institutions. What should be the relation of the believer to the church? What that

of the churches to one another? and what the relation of the Church to the State? were all questions demanding solution. Among others who offered a solution was the Rev. Robert Browne, who was born in 1549 of distinguished family. He became a clergyman in the Established Church, but soon rebelled against the enforced conformity and was imprisoned. The radical nature of his reform made him a Separatist. The doctrine was in advance of the times. Parliament, although Puritan, passed a statute against him, and he fled to Holland. He firmly believed that the Scriptures teach with sufficient clearness what is the proper manner to constitute and control churches of Christ. In 1582, he published a work, "The Life and Manners of all True Christians." The plan of the book is peculiar, in that it is arranged in the form of questions and answers in four parallel columns. The first is, "Wherefore are we called the people of God and Christians?" Answer: "Because, that by willing Covenant made with our God, we are under the government of God and Christ, and thereby do lead a godly and Christian life." Then, as now, many in the churches longed for a visible, tangible infallibility. They felt that authority was essential to good government among churches as among individuals. But where shall that power be resident? Browne's answer foreshadowed the Congregationalism of the present day at the beginning of the twentieth century, when he replied, "In the local church."

Browne gave a distinct place to the fellowship of the

churches in his polity. His oft quoted definition is a good definition even now, "A Synode is a Joyning or partaking of the authorite of manie churches mette together in peace for redresse and deciding of matters, which cannot well be otherwise taken up." He returned to England, later repudiated his published doctrines, entered again upon service in the Established Church and died in that communion. His teachings were given wide publicity. Not, however, until many years afterwards did they bear much fruit. Notwithstanding his erratic ways, his teachings must ever be held by Congregationalists in lasting remembrance. According to his doctrine, the Church should be not a pulpit, nor a hierarchy, nor an altar, nor a platform, but a believing fraternity intent on bringing the kingdom of heaven down to earth.

A London barrister set the next mile-stone in the development of the order of church government. Henry Barrowe was converted from evil habits and resolved to give his life to the redemption of his fellow men. He accepted the faith and polity of the radical Separatists and was tried and thrust into prison. John Greenwood, a clergyman in the National Church, a graduate of Oxford, joined him in his crusade and shared his imprisonment. Secretly they wrote and sent page after page to the friendly printers in Holland. Their belief was similar to that of Browne; but in polity they were not nearly so democratic. Theirs was a compromise with Presbyterianism. All the members of the local church were to elect ruling elders who should adminis-

ter all the affairs of the organization. This theory prevailed among the churches of the Puritans for more than a century. In the paper, "A True Description" of church government, published by them, it should be said that the synod is not given the power over the churches which the development of their scheme would logically require. In the amplified confession of the Amsterdam Church, issued in 1596, the thirty-eighth division is as follows: "That though Congregations bee thus distinct and severall bodyes, every one as a compact city in itself, yet are they all to walk by one and the same rule, and by all means convenient to have the counsell and help one of another in all needfull affayres of the Church, as members of one body in the common faith, under Christ their head." We must interpret the meaning of this deliverance mainly by inference; and yet there seems to be little authoritative or compulsory power, if any, given the synod or council over the churches.

In the Northeast of England, in the first years of the seventeenth century a congregation of Separatists had gathered. Fearing utter extinction, amid great privation and danger, in 1608 they sailed for Amsterdam, and a year later removed to Leyden. John Robinson was their honored pastor. We are concerned solely with his views of church polity. Trouble in the church at Amsterdam continuing, the minority (30) petitioned the Leyden Church to be present at an *ex parte* council. The request was not immediately complied with. Finally Robinson and Brewster went and freely gave such advice as

they felt needful. This appeal of the Separatist Church to another and the response, are deeply significant. It was the first public ecclesiastical function assumed by Robinson. Yet, such was the continued, as it proved fatal, contention in the church in Amsterdam, that the Leyden congregation feared to fellowship with them intimately. Ecclesiastically the Pilgrim Church in Leyden was alone.

About a dozen of the separate writings of Robinson we now have. None of his sermons were preserved. Not one of the number is upon church polity solely. We must glean, here and there, his opinions on the practice of the Pilgrim churches. But we are not left in the dark. Remembering the mission in behalf of his church to the Amsterdam council, we are not surprised to read in his letter to Bernard, entitled, "A Justification from the Church of England," "But it will be sayd, may not the officers of one or many churches meet together to discusse and consider of matters for the good of the Church, or churches, and so be called a Church Synode, or the like? I deny it not, so they infringe no order of Christ, or liberty of the brethren, they may do so, and so be called, in a sense."

The church of John Robinson, we have had occasion to examine already, was not such that it would be classified as strictly Congregational to-day. It partook largely of the features of Presbyterianism. It was far removed from the polity enunciated by Browne. In a treatise, first published in Latin by Robinson in 1625, termed

"A Just and Necessary Apology," he says, "Lest any should take occasion, either by the things here spoken by us to conceive that we either exercise amongst ourselves, or would thrust upon others any popular or democratical church government; may it please the Christian reader to make estimate of both our judgment and practice in this point, according as we believe; that the external church government under Christ, the only Mediator and Monarch, is plainly aristocratical; and to be administered by certain choice men, although the State, which many unskilful confound in the government, be after a sort popular and democratical."

Upon the title page preceding this chapter may be read an extract from the Salem Covenant. This was the voluntary bond of fellowship taken by the thirty persons who in 1629 formed the first Congregational church organized in America. The Church in Plymouth had been invited. They came by sailing vessel across the Bay, and were delayed. But before the day's exercises closed, the party, including Governor Bradford, arrived. They reviewed the proceedings, and then in behalf of the sister church in Plymouth declared "their approbation and concurrence." It was indeed gratifying and deeply significant that these two churches, the first of our order in the New World, should thus fraternize, and the older greet the younger with "the right hand of fellowship." Quite naturally, this manifest fellowship between Plymouth and Salem had far-reaching influences. The participants returned to their homes cheered by the thought

that Congregationalism was no longer merely an experiment. Thus had come logically to fruition the hopes which had been cherished in patient hearts for years.

The following year, the church in Boston was organized and chose its officers, the congregation at Plymouth being requested to observe the day in fasting, that the prayers of God's people might invoke divine blessing upon their union. A preceding chapter has been given to the first general synod of the churches, held in 1637. The clash between Independency and Presbyterianism in the Newbury church resulted in the assembling of the ministers of the Colonies in 1643. It took decided action against the encroaching Presbyterianism, namely: "That the votes of the people are needful in all admissions and excommunications, at least in way of consent." That standing councils had commended themselves at this early day to the judgment of New England, the following resolution passed by this Convention will show: "That consociation [not used here in the technical sense] of churches, in way of more general meetings, yearly; and more privately, monthly or quarterly, as consultative synods are very comfortable, and necessary for the peace and good of the churches." Still another meeting of the ministers was held again in Cambridge two years later. We know little more about it than the fact of its existence.

Nine years after the second general council of the churches adjourned in 1648, which promulgated the well known Cambridge Platform, treated at length elsewhere,

the ministers of the colonies assembled again. A discussion had been increasing throughout all the colonies from the earliest settlements over the baptism of children and the rights of children thus baptized in the Church after they had reached maturity. It was conceded that upon profession of faith in the adult, he at once entered into the full privileges of baptism and the Lord's Supper. It was not so clear what should be the attitude of the Church toward those who had been baptized in infancy by the wish of their parents and who later in mature life brought their own children to be consecrated in baptism. It is difficult for us at this distance to comprehend the intensity of the feeling that was aroused over this matter. We are told by creditable authority that the excitement threatened the very existence of some of the churches. Much light is thrown upon what may otherwise be dark, when we remember that Church and State were practically united. Membership in the one meant full citizenship in the other. The first to move officially was a body of ministers in Connecticut who petitioned the General Court to adjust the grievances in the churches. The Court thereupon appointed a commission of seven to investigate, and, if thought wise, to present memorials to the several General Courts of the Colonies. In response to a minute handed up to the Massachusetts General Court by the above commission, a second commission, of thirteen ministers, was appointed by the above Court, to meet June 4, 1657. New Haven declined to participate. Plymouth took no action

whatever. This commission sat two weeks and their deliverance fully answered the questions propounded by the Courts. It was, in brief, that the churches recognized the children baptized in infancy as members eligible to such privileges as children are competent to enjoy. But on reaching maturity they were not to commune at the Lord's Supper unless the change of heart, termed regeneration, had been experienced and a public confession of the same had been made by entering into covenant with some church.

The discussion continued unabated; and so threatening were the effects likely to be, if the matter were not settled, that the General Court issued a call for the pastors and delegates of the churches of the Colony of Massachusetts to meet in a Synod in Boston in March, 1662. About seventy responded. What is known as the "Half-Way Covenant" was the result. It reaffirms the decision of the preceding Synod. Few people were satisfied and the controversy continued. Oil had been added to flames. In Connecticut ministers petitioned their General Court for a Synod, which the authorities called. Opposition to this action at once arose. Some feared the "Half-Way Covenant" would be thrust upon them. Others objected to the use of the word "Synod" as it was a convention, not of the messengers of the churches, but solely of ministers. The latter objection, at least, was regarded as well taken; for a later session of the Court, in 1667, while repeating the call, changed the name to "Assembly."

The second question of the call issued by the Massachusetts General Court related to polity. The final deliverance, entitled, "Whether according to the Word of God there ought to be a Consociation of Churches, and what should be the manner of it," was a reply divided into eight answers which are far too long to quote here. The first, however, is in the nature of a preface; and as an exposition of the practice of the time is worthy of insertion. "Every church or particular Congregation of visible Saints in Gospel-order, being furnished with a Presbytery, at least with a Teaching Elder, and walking together in truth and peace, hath received from the Lord Jesus full power and authority Ecclesiastical within itself, regularly to administer all the ordinances of Christ, and is not under any other Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction whatsoever. For to such a Church Christ hath given the Keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven, that what they binde or loose on earth, shall be bound or loosed in heaven."

What may be popularly termed the "Half-Way Covenant" was one of the longest and most disastrous controversies in the history of Congregationalism. In the following century the ultimate findings of the Court were much modified, and in the nineteenth, entirely repudiated. In this long-drawn-out quarrel influences had their origin which resulted in the Unitarian Schism. So long and bitter was it that the churches were belittled in the eyes of the world. The most serious consequences were upon the spirituality of the people themselves.

Man's relation to the church so completely filled his horizon of thought that the greater one, man's relation to God, was lost sight of. The discussion did have an educative value. In reality the question was, "What is a Christian Church?" That answered, another inquiry naturally follows, "What is my relation, as a member, to it?"

It cannot but be noticed, that, again and again, when the clouds lowered in the religious skies and storms threatened the peace of New England, the brethren sought mutual comfort and strength in fellowship. It is alike in accord with human nature and reason that they should do so. Any seer can discern that the history of early New England would be very different from what it is if it were not for the helpful influences which went out from the synods and councils of the churches. The principle of the council was deeply laid in the hearts of men and they thoroughly believed it had a function germane to the spirit of the Pilgrim faith and practice. The first privately printed book issued in America confirms this view conclusively. John Eliot, the beloved Apostle to the Indians, in 1665, printed for distribution among his friends in the churches a little tract of thirty-eight pages entitled "The Communion of the Churches: or the Divine Management of the Gospel Churches, by the Ordinance of Councils, constituted in order according to the Scriptures." The entire scheme of the council is elaborated. Ecclesiastically, its type was a modified Barrowism. It is difficult now to say just what influence

this tract had upon the churches. But it was a prophecy of the National Council which was delayed almost two centuries. Dr. Dexter in his *magnum opus*, "Congregationalism as seen in its Literature," says: "His notion was that the churches can fairly maintain and duly manifest that unity which Christ contemplates for them, in no way so well as by Councils, or Synods,—not called together, exceptionally for special uses, but meeting regularly for systematic labors." Here, then, is an exposition of the function of the stated council from the pen of one of the most honored of the preachers of the gospel in the formative years of the life of New England.

The last third of the seventeenth century was the darkest period in New England history, socially, politically and religiously. Immigration of the Puritan element ceased for a time. Disasters on the sea were destructive to commerce. Fires in the towns and settlements of the colonies did untold damage. The wars with the Indians, in which one-tenth of all the able-bodied fighting men lost their lives, devastated the entire country. For the first time since the settlement of the land a considerable number returned to the mother country. The churches suffered severely with all the rest.

Under such conditions, under the leadership of Rev. Increase Mather, the ministers appealed to the General Court of Massachusetts to call a synod to consider: "Whether a Convention of the Churches by their Elders and Messengers bee not extraordinarily necessary at this Time, as a most general means unto the attainment of

these great ends proposed; and whether therefore God doth not now call the Churches thereunto. Many things appear unto us, necessary in such an Assembly, which cannot bee orderly and effectually wrought otherwise. That the Churches may have opportunity for to labour (at least) to find out, and fix upon the right means and method of practice as to things which have been already clearly and firmly stated from the word of God, that so the Churches may concur, and assist one another therein, in a way of public order, peace, union and communion." The above is only a small portion of this memorable address, embodying one of the clearest and most convincing expositions of the principle and function of the council which we have had in our history as a denomination.

This petition was presented to the Court May 28, 1679, and received immediately a grateful acceptance and favorable response. The synod was called to meet in the following September, and to consider the following questions: "1. What are the evills that have provoked the Lord to bring his judgments on New England?" "2. What is to be donn that so these evills may be reformed?" The churches of Massachusetts received the call with manifest favor and a general fast was observed throughout all the churches. The people gathered in their respective houses of worship and implored God to bless the deliberations of the contemplated council of the churches.

It has already been noted that the meeting was *not* a

general synod. Only the churches of Massachusetts were present in the persons of their delegates. Yet it was one of the most influential bodies which ever met in our communion. Upon convening, it was found that a few of the churches were represented only by their pastors. These churches were at once requested to send also messengers from the laity. It was done. It is well for us to take note of this; for a growing evil in our present National Council is the paucity and weakness of the lay element. The result, including an address to the Court, the formal answers to the questions propounded, and "A Confession of Faith" almost identical with the Savoy Confession adopted in England in 1658, was presented to the Court. It met with favor:—"Wee doe judge it meete to comend the same to the serious consideration of all the churches and people in this jurisdiction."

The opening years of the eighteenth century brought little relief to the troubled hearts of the struggling Christian people of the colonies. Again, a division of sentiment was very marked touching the manner of true Christian living and the method of administering the churches of Christ. One evil was no sooner met and successfully overcome than another appeared. In England, the skies were no brighter. Common dangers had indeed drawn Non-conformists closer together. Especially had Presbyterian and Congregational ministers fraternized as never before. Rev. Increase Mather spent some time in the old country at this period and his influence tended to bring the differing pastors to-

gether. Union meetings were accordingly held, attended by the pastors of the two denominations. Out of such a gathering emanated the famous compact known as the "Heads of Agreement." It was not designed to be a complete exposition of ecclesiastical polity. But it was, nevertheless, as Dr. Bacon has declared, "in fact, if not in name, a Congregational Platform." Its great weakness was the small place it gave the laity. It called for a government of the clergy. This document, like the Savoy Confession, strange as it may appear, had very little weight in England. It was soon forgotten in the midst of heated doctrinal controversy that drove the two denominations apart. It did, however, have great influence in America, especially in Connecticut, where it was virtually incorporated in the Saybrook Platform. Thus it initiated the legalized polity of an important colony for three quarters of a century, or from 1708 until 1784.

The troublous times of the early years of the eighteenth century incited the ministers to closer fellowship. It was the era in which ministerial associations were formed. In them social amenities, intellectual stimulus and spiritual incitement found congenial soil. The polity of the churches quite naturally came in for discussion and extended consideration. The Association which met "at the College in Cambridge, on a Monday at nine or ten of the clock in the morning, once in six weeks, or oftener," finally, after long deliberation passed and published to the churches the following:

"Synods, duly composed of messengers chosen by

them whom they are to represent, and proceeding with a due regard unto the will of God in his Word, are to be reverenced, as determining the mind of the Holy Spirit concerning things necessary to be received and practiced in order to the edification of the churches therein represented. Synods, being of Apostolic example, recommended as a necessary ordinance, it is but reasonable that their judgment be acknowledged as decisive, in the affairs for which they are ordained."

Presbyterianism is written in large letters across the face of such a document. To some it seemed to subvert all that the early Pilgrims held dear in church government. As is so often the case, the older men were conservative, the younger men in the ministry were radical. The old straw of the "Half-Way Covenant" had to be threshed over again. It was inevitable. Not alone the pulpit but the pew desired to break away from the unyielding traditions with regard to the conduct of worship in the churches. The liberals desired to have the privilege of reading the Bible without comment in the services and to repeat the Lord's Prayer with the congregation. Both practices were contrary to the customs and belief of the early Pilgrims. Conservatives and Liberals both sought comfort and support in practically the same means, namely, a ministers' conference. This was held September 11, 1705, in Boston, and was composed of nine delegates, representing five *ministerial* associations. The laity were not represented. As a result, the "Proposals of 1705," as they are widely known in the history

of Congregational polity, were issued. Later, they were approved in an even larger convention.

The main question propounded had been, "What further steps are to be taken that the Councils may have due Constitution and Efficacy in supporting, preserving, and well ordering the Interest of the Churches in the Country?" The "Proposals" state (permit me to give a very brief synopsis) the organization of local associations by the ministers, "to consider such things as may properly lie before them relating to their own faithfulness towards each other, and the common interests of the churches;" that pastors receive the advice so rendered; that candidates be licensed to preach; that ecclesiastical councils be called when deemed necessary and expedient; that the several associations maintain fellowship with each other.

For our purpose, however, the most important deliverance was the following: "That these associated pastors, with a proper number of delegates from their several churches, *be formed into a standing or stated council,* which shall consult, advise and determine all affairs that shall be proper matter for the consideration of an ecclesiastical Council within their respective limits."

These "Proposals" were formally endorsed and approved by the ministers in convention May 30, 1706, and as they voiced the opinions of the majority of the pastors, little opposition to them was aroused. Yet only one-half the "Proposals" ever went into effect. The recommendation that district associations be formed, where

they had not already been organized, was acted upon quite universally. The proposal to create standing councils remained a dead letter. Why, has only in part been comprehended by later historians. Certain it was, that the government, or more definitely the legislative and judicial authorities, did not regard the suggestion with favor. There was also a minority among the ministry, few in numbers, and yet influential, who always feared such concentration of power as leading inevitably to Presbyterianism. It remained for a pastor almost unknown at the time, the Rev. John Wise of Ipswich, to achieve lasting fame by writing a satire upon the polity proposed in the deliverance of the convention. The tract was entitled "The Churches' Quarrel Espoused." In it he held up to ridicule what he regarded the inconsistency of the "Proposals." It was a note of warning that aroused many. The boldness of the attack and the ability of the writer astounded even the old veterans. Standing, authoritative councils were declared to be perils which endangered the freedom of the Pilgrim churches. It "smells so strong of the pope's cooks and kitchen . . . that it is enough to strangle a freeborn England, and much more these churches that have lived in such a clear air and under such enlargements so long a time."

John Wise proved himself a master of our church polity. And, what was more, his literary style was incomparable. Tyler, in writing his "History of American Literature," regards him among the foremost stylists the

country has produced. In 1717, he published a larger and more ambitious work. It was no less than an attempted exposition of Congregational polity from the beginning. It is stimulating reading even now, and has lost little in the passing years. To it, ever since, students of church polity have resorted for convincing argument to prove that "Democracy is Christ's government in church and state." It contains but 105 pages, but it is an arsenal of facts. Listen to his convincing conclusion: "The people or fraternity, under the Gospel, are the first subjects of power; that a democracy in church or state is a very honorable and regular government, according to the dictates of right reason; that these churches in their ancient constitution of church order, it being a democracy, are manifested, justified and defended by the law and light of nature."

We should remember that the issue presented by the "Proposals" had been pretty effectually fought out before the publication of the books of Wise. Still, they must be given due weight. Dr. Dexter says that they "provoked a discussion which in time revolutionized the internal philosophy of the New England polity, cast out Barrowism with all its belongings, and brought back the original Brownism, purged of its connate inconsistencies and harmonized and perfected for the great uses of the future."

Thus was passed one of the mile-stones in the history of Congregational polity. John Robinson's aristocratic conception of the ministry had been vanquished; and the

earlier and more democratic theories of Francis Lambert and Robert Browne had triumphed. The old contention had not wholly subsided, however, for just seven weeks after the death of Wise, Cotton Mather brought before the Minister's Convention, which endorsed it, a petition to call a synod to consider "What are the miscarriages whereof we have reason to think the judgment of heaven, upon us, call us to be more generally sensible, and what may be the most evangelical and effectual expedients to put a stop unto those or the like miscarriages." The two Houses of the Legislature were divided upon the request. The Upper, composed almost entirely of elderly men, favored it, the Lower disapproved, but eventually concurred in referring the petition to the Court. Lieutenant-Governor William Dummer approved.

The Colony had witnessed radical changes in the past generation. Englishmen from the Established Church had settled to become more and more prominent in the commercial and social life of Massachusetts. These Episcopalians objected to the calling of another synod, and appealed to the Bishop of London. Presently, the authorities of the English Church spoke in no uncertain sound, communicating with the Acting Governor. The synod was forbidden. "It is thought here that the clergy should not meet in so public and authoritative a manner without the King's consent as head of the Church, and that it would be a bad precedent for dissenters here to ask the same privilege, which, if granted, would be a sort of vying with the Established Church. It has also

been insinuated that this Synod would have come to some resolutions to the prejudice of the Church of England."

Here was a new condition to cope with. In the early days of the colony, the churches had been left almost alone to work out their own polity and destiny. Now the "Head of the Church" reaches across the sea and with heavy hand enforces whatever conformity is possible. These conditions remained practically unchanged until the Revolution and were no inconsiderable factor in goading the colonists to rebellion.

Chronologically, we must retrace our steps, and consider the neighboring Colony of Connecticut which had been passing through very similar experiences. There was a longing on the part of laity and clergy for more authority somewhere resident in the churches. The founding of a college called together the ministers of southern Connecticut. Yale College was established in 1701. They then turned to the consideration of the churches of which they were pastors. A circular letter was issued. The response was general and favorable. The next step was the presentation of the matter to the Legislature, which called a synod to meet at Saybrook, September 9, 1708. And here a strange action took place. After prolonged consideration, as an expression of the faith of the churches, the Savoy Confession, which had been formulated in England but never generally accepted there, was adopted. And in polity, the "Heads of Agreement," the joint action of the Presbyterian and

Congregational ministers of London, was taken as a guide. Twelve ministers and four laymen composing the synod issued the famous "Saybrook Platform." The noted "Proposals" of the Massachusetts Convention of 1705 also had weight. The "Articles for the Administration of Church Discipline" are fifteen in number. They provided that the churches should all be grouped in *consociations*, or "standing councils," one or more in each county. In these bodies should reside adequate power to govern the ministers and the churches. An annual "General Association" should also be established, composed of delegated representatives from all the churches. The minute of the Synod was presented to the Legislature for approval. It was at once commended and established as the law of the land.

It is to be noted at this point that what proved unacceptable to Massachusetts, was received with favor in Connecticut. This fact had great influence in future years in determining the polity of the two regions. Under the Saybrook Platform, Congregational churches became more and more Presbyterianized. We have seen, in another chapter, how the Connecticut churches seemed to be nearer the Presbyterian churches of the more southern colonies, in doctrine and practice, than they were the churches as administered in Massachusetts. The "Plan of Union" was the legitimate outcome of such tendencies; and Congregationalists going West were already tutored to appreciate the Presbyterian order of church government.

One more synod requires our attention. It was the last to be called by the government. The revivals in the period of the Great Awakening had disturbed church relations to such an extent that the controversy demanded action. Ministers therefore petitioned the Legislature of Connecticut to call "a General Consociation of the churches in this colony, consisting of three ministers and three messengers from each particular consociation." The call expressed the hope "that such a general convention may issue in the accommodation of divisions, settling peace, love, and charity and promoting the true interest of vital religion." This Council met in Guilford, November 24, 1741, and passed resolutions deploring the results of the emotional revivalism which had swept over the land and left so little permanent spiritual result. Itinerant preachers, often without education and ecclesiastical standing, had introduced controversy, heresy and division among the churches. This Synod was called because of the exigencies of the time.

We have now passed in rapid review the trend of events pertaining to the development of the polity of the Independent churches and have reached the period when the present National Council was broached and finally consummated. It is a study of exceeding interest, reflecting not alone the exterior organization of the churches, but the inner life of the believers in Christ. The consideration throws a flood of light upon institutions otherwise impossible to comprehend. The Council has become a common denominator, an ecclesiastical

solvent; yet, in the beginning, though in theory the early fathers had a place for it, the idea was never put into practice. The Separatists, from the very nature of their polity, felt constantly the need of something which would give unity. They were fully persuaded from bitter experience that nothing tends to drive men apart as autocratic power to compel men to be united. In the original home of modern Congregationalism, the English have developed, under pressing need, this idea of denominational autonomy in a very different manner from ourselves. The meeting of the International Council in 1891 was the fulfilment of many prayers, the consummation of many ardent hopes.

The increase in the number of the churches, their growth in influence and wealth, the complexity of American civilization over an enormously increased area, all combined to make necessary the power which comes with united spirit and effort. As the messengers, long ago, went up from the scattered churches to Jerusalem, so the delegations were urged to gather in council in America, that through prayer and converse the Master's work might be the better done. The ancient theory had not been changed; its legitimate outcome in practice was equally happy and effective. Delegates came, not to sit as ministers or deacons, but as representatives of the churches. Theoretically, then, when the National Council convenes, every member of every church represented is constructively present to share in the deliberations of the body. The idea of a National Council is an out-

growth from that of the fellowship of the churches. It is not the lack of power in the individual church, which renders necessary the application of fellowship, for each church is sovereign in itself, but it is rather the earnest desire to so order its work that the fraternal confidence and cooperation of all the churches may be secured to assist in carrying forward its purposes.

In principle, therefore, the function of the National Council, as at present interpreted, should give no cause for alarm to the most conservative. Yet we must remark that no small element in our churches has at times regarded the institution with deep concern and evident distrust. Developments in our denominational life, even in the last generation, have incited prolonged reflection. The growing power and work of the national benevolent societies; their relations to each other and to the churches sustaining them; the assumption of authority by local and State associations; the intellectual unrest in educational institutions founded and maintained by the patronage of our people; the theological drifting of an element of the clergy; the uncertainty at times of ministerial standing:—these are only a few of the problems which have demanded solution.

These phenomena impel some of our number to seek more authority. Many would welcome such. But where is it to reside? So long as this power is inherent in the local church, the polity of the churches will not be estopped nor its traditions violated. But it is an open secret that there are clergy, and laity as well, among our

churches, who would endow the National Council with additional powers. In this, we should make haste slowly. The local church is the unit of our ecclesiastical system. It is at once the corner-stone and keystone as well. With any violent, radical change the entire ecclesiastical structure would be in danger of collapse. The unwritten constitution of our polity is very clear on this point. The National Council is not a caucus, a place to win votes for men and measures; it is not a court of appeal to hear, try and settle disputes. Yet it is both and more. It is a parliament in which brethren gather to consider Christ's work, the members of which advise ways and means for the promotion of Christianity. The Council's influence, then, is not legislative, executive, formal, but moral and religious.

To express and foster the unity, not the consolidation, of the churches, in doctrine, polity and work, is the supreme object of the National Council. It does not make any claim to promulgate what the churches must believe, but it does presume to inquire what is that belief, and gladly disseminates the faith thus discerned for the edification of the people. It does not presume to dictate the polity to be pursued by any single church; it can, however, take knowledge of the practice of all the churches and declare the unity of the order of government which makes strong the bonds of peace. A certain lack of organization to express the strength of the church life was the bane and weakness of the early Pilgrims. Much power ran to waste because not conserved. Organized

fellowship is what we most need to-day. "Many hands make light work" in the Master's service. This we need as a denomination more than enforced uniformity. This was the thought that prompted Professor George T. Ladd, while still a pastor, in his suggestive book, "The Principles of Church Polity" to write at the close of the volume: "We may possibly come, through the thrift of the National Council, or otherwise, to have a more visibly compact and centralized form of church government; we may possibly come to have this without violating the principles of Christ's exclusive rulership, of the equality and self-control of the individual and of the autonomy of the local church. We may possibly find some set and formal means for really cultivating and honestly expressing an improved spirit of communion amongst the churches. If such an end, through such means, can be reached, the end may justify the means."

We have the witness of the Christian consciousness and the testimony of Christian experience extending through eighteen hundred years. Can this inheritance of the simple polity from an honored ancestry meet the demands of modern society? Or must the structure of our independent ecclesiastical system give way before the more highly organized polities of sister communions? This will depend on many things. Growth signifies change. Expansion is the type and sign of life. The work of Congregationalism is not yet done. Even greater conquest beckons it forward. But, when organization is in the air, some decry union effort in the Church!

Centripetal power must be invoked to counteract the prevailing, dissipating effects of the hurried modern life. The Council has its work, but it cannot do everything. It cannot be a panacea for all the ills the churches fall heir to. It cannot be a wet-nurse to keep alive all infantile projects to which eccentric ecclesiastics give birth. It has also a place in the hearts, the prayers, the work of God's people. That place is not one occupied by the local church, or the district conference or the state association. Authority! Congregationalists are not afraid of it so long as it is legitimately exercised. Law we must have; but we would not lose our liberty. The tyranny of bishops and the despotism of kings drove our fathers across stormy seas. No such evil confronts the churches to-day. In the inspiration of a glorious heritage the Pilgrim son goes forth undaunted, with grateful heart that he has come to the kingdom at such a time as this. Congregationalism gave law to the Republic and has had no mean part in subduing a continent; it still has a part and a place in the advancing interests of the nation.

The past history of the National Council is secure. It has vindicated its right to be and has well-nigh disarmed criticism. Mistakes have been made, serious mistakes,—but they were not irreparable. What of the future? Between the eternities of the past and the future, there is a vanishing point we call the present. That alone is ours. The Pilgrims were men of lofty purpose and mighty will. In the face of the weakness of perpetual disintegration,

they pursued amidst unutterable sacrifice the high ideal of faith and practice which they found in the Word of God. And with the intensity of conviction born of righteous hope, with the energy of unwavering faith, must we, the descendants and heirs of the ancient Pilgrims, go up, triennially, to the meeting of the churches.

CHRONOLOGY OF CONGREGATIONAL POLITY

1527 Francis Lambert's "Paradoxes" published.
1582 Robt. Browne's "Life and Manners" issued.
1586 Barrowe & Greenwood in prison in London.
1588 "Martin Marprelate" Tracts in England.
1589 Barrowe & Greenwood's "True Description."
1592 First modern Congregational Church—London.
1595 Church established in Amsterdam, Holland.
1596 "A True Confession" published.
1602 Congregational Church organized in Gainsborough, England.
1606 Scrooby Church organized.
1608 Scrooby Church removes to Amsterdam.
1609 Scrooby Church removes to Leyden.
1611 King James Version of Bible published.
1614 Council held in Amsterdam Church.
1616 Church organized in Southwark.
1620 Pilgrims sail for America.
1624 First Puritan emigration.
1629 Salem Church formed.
1630 First General Court in Massachusetts.
1635 Removal to Connecticut.
1636 Harvard College founded.
1637 First General Convention.
1638 New Haven Colony founded.
1643 Ministers' Conference in Cambridge.
1643 Westminster Assembly assembles.
1646 Second General Convention.
1651 General Court approves Cambridge Platform.
1657 Ministers' Conference in Boston.
1658 General Synod, Savoy Palace, London.

1662 Massachusetts Synod, Boston, Approved Half-Way Covenant.
1679 Massachusetts (Reforming) Synod, Boston.
1690 Ministers' Association, Boston, formed.
1701 Yale founded.
1705 "Proposals" of Massachusetts' Associations.
1708 Saybrook (Conn.) Synod, Saybrook Platform.
1709 General Association of Connecticut formed.
1725 Attempt of General Court of Massachusetts to call a Synod of the Churches.
1740 Great Revival of Religion.
1741 Guilford, Connecticut, Synod. Last one called by the State.
1784 Saybrook Platform ceased to be law.
1801 Plan of Union adopted.
1810 American Board organized. First Sunday-School in Massachusetts.
1826 American Home Missionary Society organized.
1833 Declarations of Faith and Principles of Church Order adopted in England.
1837 General Assembly Presbyterian Church abrogated Plan of Union.
1852 General Convention, Albany, New York—Year Book, Congregational Library Association, Cong. Church Building Society.
1865 General Convention, Boston. Burial Hill Declaration.
1871 First Triennial National Council, Oberlin.
1874 Second Triennial National Council, New Haven.
1877 Third Triennial National Council, Detroit, Mich.
1880 Fourth Triennial National Council, St. Louis, Mo.
1883 Fifth Triennial National Council, Concord, N. H.
1886 Sixth Triennial National Council, Chicago, Ill.
1889 Seventh Triennial National Council, Worcester, Mass.
1891 First International Council, London.
1892 Eighth Triennial National Council, Minneapolis, Minn.
1895 Ninth Triennial National Council, Syracuse, N. Y.
1898 Tenth Triennial Council, Portland, Ore.
1899 Second International Council, Boston.
1901 Eleventh Triennial National Council, Portland, Maine.

GENERAL CONVENTIONS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES OF AMERICA

DATE	PLACE	NO.	MODERATOR	1st ASS'T MOD.	2d ASS'T MOD.	SECRETARY
1637	Newtown	50	Rev. Peter Bulkeley	Rev. Thomas Hooker		John Higginson
1646–8		60				
1852	Albany	463	Rev. T. W. Dwight	Rev. Noah Porter	Rev. Asa Turner	Rev. R. S. Storrs
1865	Boston	502	Hon. W. A. Buckingham	Charles G. Hammond	Rev. Jas. P. Thompson	Rev. H. M. Dexter
1871	Oberlin	291	Rev. W. I. Budington	Gen. O. O. Howard	Rev. G. H. Atkinson	Rev. A. H. Quint
1874	New Haven	339	Hon. S. L. Foster	Rev. G. F. Magoun	Rev. I. E. Dwinell	" "
1877	Detroit	297	Hon. W. B. Washburn	Rev. A. L. Chapin	Hon. C. G. Hammond	" "
1880	St. Louis	321	Rev. H. M. Dexter	Rev. J. M. Sturtevant	Rev. J. D. Smith	" "
1883	Concord	249	Rev. Arthur Little	Frederick Billings	Rev. Cushing Eells	Rev. H. A. Hazen
1886	Chicago	407	Hon. L. A. Cooke	Rev. J. K. McLean	Rev. B. A. Imes	" "
1889	Worcester	360	Pres. Cyrus Northrop	Ira H. Evans	Rev. F. S. Fitch	" "
1892	Minneapolis	362	Rev. A. H. Quint	Hon. B. McCutcheon	Rev. Geo. C. Rowe	" "
1895	Syracuse	370	Hon. Nelson Dingley	Rev. C. O. Brown	Rev. Geo. W. Henderson	" "
1898	Portland, Or.	211	Rev. F. A. Noble	Rev. Geo. C. Adams	Hon. O. V. Coffin	" "
1901	Portland, Me.					Rev. Asher Anderson

DATE	REGISTRAR	TREASURER	AUDITOR	PREACHER	TEXT	FEATURES OF THE SESSION
1637						"Condemned 82 erroneous opinions and nine unwholesome expressions."
1646						"Questions of Ch. gov. and discipline." Adopted Westminster Confession. Issued Manual.
1852	Rev. J. C. Holbrook					"Plan of Union" abolished. Year Book. Cong. Church Bldg. Soc. Cong. Library.
1865	Dea. Sam. Holmes			Rev. J. M. Sturtevant		Declaration of Faith. Denom. loyalty. Declaration of Polity. Sys. Benevolence.
1871	Rev. W. H. Moore	Chas. G. Hammond		Leonard Bacon	Eph. 1:22	Organization of National Council. Ministerial Supply. Comity.
1874	"	"	Chas. T. Russell	R. S. Storrs	John 4:8 Matt. 5:8	Benevolent Societies. Vacant Churches.
1877	"	Chas. Demond	L. S. Ward	Zachary Eddy	Hosea 14:5-7	The Parish. Woman's Work. Sunday-School. Evangelization.
1880	"	H. M. Dexter	Chas. Benedict	S. E. Herrick	Luke 11:29	First Woman delegate. "The New West." Creed Commission appointed.
1883	"	Lavalette Perrin	David N. Camp	F. A. Noble	1 Peter 2:18	Unfavorable circumstances. Indians. Spiritual earnestness. The Children.
1886	"	"	"	Geo. P. Fisher	1 Cor. 3:2	The Pastorate. Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. Ministerial Relief. Evangelism.
1889	"	"	"	I. E. Dwinell	Isa. 55:4	Polity of the Churches. Color Line. Preparations for First International Council.
1892	"	Sam. B. Forbes	"	C. M. Lamson	Matt. 23:8	Benev. Soc's, their relation to the Chs. and to each other. The Sabbath.
1895	"	"	"	F. W. Gunsaulus	Gn.11:1-10 Ac. 2:1-13	Sermons by Dr. Gunsaulus and Mr. Moody. Very able papers. Missionary Soc.s' Day.
1898	"	"	"	A. J. Lyman	Eph. 2:14	Mediation. Color Ques. Settled. Retrospect of Western Congregationalism.
1901	Rev. Joel S. Ives	"	"			

CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS AND RULES OF ORDER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

CONSTITUTION

[Adopted Nov. 17, 1871]

The Congregational churches of the United States, by elders and messengers assembled, do now associate themselves in National Council,—

To express and foster their substantial unity in doctrine, polity and work; and

To consult upon the common interests of all the churches, their duties in the work of evangelization, the united development of their resources, and their relations to all parts of the kingdom of Christ.

They agree in belief that the Holy Scriptures are the sufficient and only infallible rule of religious faith and practice, their interpretation thereof being in substantial accordance with the great doctrines of the Christian faith, commonly called evangelical, held in our churches from the early times, and sufficiently set forth by former General Councils.

They agree in belief that the right of government resides in local churches, or congregations of believers who are responsible directly to the Lord Jesus Christ, the one head of the Church Universal and of all particular churches; but that all churches, being in communion one with another as parts of Christ's catholic church, have mutual duties subsisting in the obligations of fellowship.

The churches, therefore, while establishing this National Council for the furtherance of the common interests and work of all the churches, do maintain the scriptural and inalienable right of each church to self-government and administration; and this National Council shall never exercise legislative or judicial authority, nor consent to act as a council of reference.

And, for the convenience of orderly consultation, they establish the following rules:—

I. *Sessions.*—The churches will meet in National Council every third year. They shall also be convened in special session whenever any five of the general State organizations shall so request.

II. *Representation.*—The churches shall be represented, at each session, by delegates, either ministers or laymen, appointed in number and manner as follows:—

1. The churches, assembled in their local organizations, appoint one delegate for every ten churches in their respective organizations, and one for a fraction of ten greater than one half, it being understood that wherever the churches of any State are directly united in a general organization, they may, at their option, appoint the delegates in such body, instead of in local organizations, but in the above ratio of churches so united.

2. In addition to the above, the churches united in State organizations appoint by such body one delegate, and one for each ten thousand communicants in their fellowship, and one for a major fraction thereof;

3. It being recommended that the number of dele-

gates be, in all cases, divided between ministers and laymen, as nearly equally as is practicable. Each State or local organization may provide in its own way for filling vacancies in its delegation.

4. Such Congregational societies for Christian work as may be recognized by this Council, and the faculties of Congregational theological seminaries and colleges, may be represented by one delegate each, such representatives having the right of discussion only.

III. *Officers.*—1. At the beginning of every stated or special session, there shall be chosen by ballot, from those present as members, a moderator, and one or more assistant moderators, to preside over its deliberations.

2. At each triennial session there shall be chosen by a ballot a secretary, a registrar, and a treasurer, to serve from the close of such session to the close of the next triennial session.

3. The secretary shall receive communications for the Council, conduct correspondence, and collect such facts and superintend such publications as may from time to time be ordered.

4. The registrar shall make and preserve the records of the proceedings of the Council; and for his aid one or more assistants shall be chosen at each session, to serve during such session.

5. The treasurer shall do the work ordinarily belonging to such office.

6. At each triennial session there shall be chosen a provisional committee, who shall make needful arrange-

ments for the next triennial session, and for any session called during the interval.

7. Committees shall be appointed, and in such manner as may from time to time be ordered.

8. Any member of a church in fellowship may be chosen to the office of secretary, registrar, or treasurer; and such officers shall be enrolled as members of the Council.

IV. *By-Laws.*—The Council may make and alter by-laws at any triennial session.

V. *Amendments.*—This Constitution shall not be altered or amended, except at a triennial session, and by a two-thirds vote, notice thereof having been given at a previous triennial session, or the proposed alteration having been requested by some general State organization of churches, and published with the notification of the session.

DECLARATION OF THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

[Adopted in 1871]

The members of the National Council, representing the Congregational churches of the United States, avail themselves of this opportunity to renew their previous declarations of faith in the unity of the Church of God.

While affirming the liberty of our churches, as taught in the New Testament, and inherited by us from our

fathers, and from martyrs and confessors of foregoing ages, we adhere to this liberty all the more as affording the ground and hope of a more visible unity in time to come. We desire and propose to cooperate with all the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the expression of the same catholic sentiments solemnly avowed by the Council of 1865 on the Burial Hill at Plymouth, we wish, at this new epoch of our history, to remove, so far as in us lies, all causes of suspicion and alienation, and to promote the growing unity of counsel and of effort among the followers of Christ. To us, as to our brethren, "There is one body and one spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling."

As little as did our fathers in their day, do we in ours, make a pretension to be the only churches of Christ. We find ourselves consulting and acting together under the distinctive name of Congregationalists, because in the present condition of our common Christianity we have felt ourselves called to ascertain and to do our own appropriate part of the work of Christ's Church among men.

We especially desire, in prosecuting the common work of evangelizing our own land and the world, to observe the common and sacred law, that, in the wide field of the world's evangelization, we do our work in friendly cooperation with all those who love and serve our common Lord.

We believe in "the holy catholic Church." It is our prayer and endeavor that the unity of the Church may

be more and more apparent, and that the prayer of our Lord for his disciples may be speedily and completely answered, and all be one; that by consequence of this Christian unity in love, the world may believe in Christ as sent of the Father to save the world.

BY-LAWS

I. In all its official acts and records, this body shall be designated as "The National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States."

II. It shall be understood that the term for which delegates to the Council are appointed expires with each session, triennial or special, to which they are chosen.

III. Statistical secretaries of state and territorial bodies, ministers serving the churches entertaining the Council, the retiring moderator, and former moderators, persons selected as preachers, or to prepare papers or to serve upon committees chosen by this body, and missionaries in the service of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions present, shall be entitled to all the privileges of members in the session in which they are to serve, except that of voting.

IV. The term "Congregational," as applied to the general benevolent societies, in connection with representation in this body, is understood in the broad sense of societies whose constituency and control are substantially Congregational.

V. The provisional committee shall consist of eleven persons, the moderator, the secretary, the registrar, and the treasurer, *ex officiis*, and seven others chosen by the Council, including two members of the last previous committee; and four shall be a quorum.

They shall specify the place and precise time at which each session shall begin; shall choose a preacher; may select topics regarding the Christian work of the churches, and persons to prepare and present papers thereon; shall do any work referred to them by the Council; shall name a place for the next triennial Council; may fill any vacancy occurring in their own number or in any committee or office in the intervals of sessions, the persons so appointed to serve until the next session; shall have authority to contract for all necessary expenditures except such as are required to be made by the publishing committee, and to appoint one of their number who shall approve and sign all bills for payment; shall appoint any committees ordered but not appointed; and committees so appointed shall be entered in the minutes as by the action of the Council; shall consult the interests of the Council and act for it in said intervals, subject to the revision of the Council: and shall make a full report of all their doings, the consideration of which shall be first in order of business after organization. The provisional and publishing committees are authorized to meet immediately after the close of the session.

They shall lay out a definite program for the Council,

assigning a distinct time, not to be changed except in special emergencies, to

(1) The papers appointed to be read before the Council.

(2) The standing and *ad interim* committees appointed by one Council to report at the next, who may present the topics referred to them for discussion or action.

(3) The benevolent societies and theological seminaries, when each society and seminary may be heard for a specified time, not exceeding twenty minutes, by its delegate to the Council.

All other business shall be set for other specified hours, and shall not displace the regular order, except by special vote of the Council.

VI. The sessions shall ordinarily be held in the latter part of October, or the early part of November.

VII. The call for any session shall be signed by the chairman of the provisional committee and the secretary of the Council, and it shall contain a list of topics proposed by the committee; and the secretary shall seasonably furnish blank credentials and other needful papers to the scribes of the several local organizations of churches.

VIII. Immediately after the organization of the Council the committee of nominations shall name to the body the following committees:—

1. A committee, including the secretary, on credentials, who shall prepare a roll of members.

2. And at their convenience they shall name to the

Council a publishing committee of five, including the secretary, registrar and treasurer, who shall seek bids, contract for and distribute all publications ordered by the Council.

3. A business committee, to propose a docket for the use of the members. Except by special vote of the Council, no business shall be introduced which has not thus passed through the hands of this committee.

4. A finance committee.

Committees shall be composed of three persons each, except otherwise ordered. The first named member of each standing or *ad interim* committee shall be chairman thereof, and shall so continue unless the committee shall otherwise provide at a meeting of which every member shall have been especially informed. Honorary members shall be eligible to serve on special committees at the session; and any member of any Congregational church connected with the Council shall be eligible to appointment upon any committee to serve after the close of the session.

IX. In the sessions of the National Council, half an hour shall every morning be given to devotional services, and the daily sessions shall be opened with prayer, and closed with prayer or singing. Every morning and evening shall be given to meetings of a specifically religious rather than business character.

X. No person shall occupy more than three quarters of an hour in reading any paper or report, and no speaker upon any motion or resolution, or any paper read, shall

occupy more than ten minutes, without the unanimous consent of the Council.

XI. An auditor of accounts shall be appointed at every session.

XII. The Council approves of an annual compilation of the statistics of the churches, and of a list of such ministers as are reported by the several State organizations. And the secretary is directed to present at each triennial session comprehensive and comparative summaries for the three years preceding.

XIII. The Council, as occasion may arise, will hold communication with the general Congregational bodies of other lands, and with the general ecclesiastical organizations of other churches of evangelical faith in our own land, by delegates appointed by the Council or by the provisional committee.

XIV. The presiding officers shall retain their offices until their successors are chosen, and the presiding moderator at the opening of the session shall take the chair, and the secretary shall at once collect the credentials of delegates present, and shall report the names of persons representing bodies already in affiliation with the Council, who shall *prima facie* be the constituency of the same, for immediate organization and business. The moderator shall then name the committee of nominations, subject to the approval of the Council, which shall at once proceed to the election of its presiding officers. In the absence of the moderator and the assistant moderators, the provisional committee is authorized to appoint some

person to act as moderator of the opening session of the Council.

XV. Such reports from committees, and statements from societies or theological seminaries as may be furnished to the secretary seasonably in advance of the session, may be printed at the discretion of the publishing committee, and sent to the members elect together with the program prepared by the provisional committee. Not more than ten minutes shall be given to the reading of any such report.

XVI. Reports and statements shall not be referred to committees except by vote of the Council.

RULES OF ORDER

The rules of order shall be those found in common parliamentary use, not modified by local legislative practice, with the following explicit modifications:—

1. When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received, except the following, namely: to amend, to commit, to postpone to a time certain, to postpone indefinitely, to lay on the table, and to adjourn,—which shall have precedence in the reverse order of this list, the motions to lay on the table and to adjourn alone being not debatable. But the Council at any time, on the motion of one member, seconded by five other members, and by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, may order a vote to be taken upon the pending question;

after this is so ordered, the debate shall not be cut off for one half hour, provided any member desires to speak; but during that time, no speaker shall speak more than five minutes.

2. No member shall speak more than twice to the merits of any question in debate, except by special permission of the body; nor more than once, until every member desiring to speak shall have spoken.

3. Ordinarily, voting shall be *viva voce*, or by show of hands; but any member may call for a division, in which case the number voting on each side shall be counted, announced by the Chair, entered in the minutes, and published in the printed reports of the proceedings.

4. If the report of committee contains nothing more than matters of fact for information, or matters of argument for the consideration of the Council, the question is: *Shall the report be accepted?* and that question, unless superseded by a motion to reject, to recommit, to postpone, or to lay upon the table, shall be taken without debate. Such a report, if accepted, is placed upon the files of the Council, but, not being an act of the Council, is not entered on the minutes.

(*a*) If the report is in the form of a vote or resolution, or of a declaration expressing the judgment or testimony of the Council, the additional question arises: *Shall the report be adopted?* and motions for amendment are in order. Such a report, if adopted, with or without amendment, is the act of the Council, and is entered on the minutes.

(*b*) If a report gives the views of the committee on the matter referred to them, and terminates with the form of a resolution or declaration in the name of the Council, the questions are: *Shall the report be accepted?* and *Shall the resolution or declaration be adopted?* and while the report at large, if accepted, is placed on file, that part of it which has become the act of the Council is entered on the minutes.

CHARTER — TRUSTEES OF NATIONAL COUNCIL

The following was adopted by the National Council, 1886[1]:—

Whereas, The General Assembly of Connecticut, at its session, January, 1885, passed the following act of incorporation:—

"*Resolution incorporating the Trustees of the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States.*

General Assembly, January Session, A. D. 1885.

Resolved by this Assembly,—

Section 1. That Julius H. Seelye, Frederick A. Noble, Henry Fairbanks, William M. Taylor, George F. Magoun, E. S. Jones, Samuel B. Capen, Henry A. Hazen, William H. Moore, Lavalette Perrin, and such other persons as may be associated with them, and their succes-

[1] Minutes, page 18.

sors, be, and they hereby are, constituted a body politic and corporate, under the name of The Trustees of the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States.

Sect. 2. The object of the corporation is to do and promote charitable and Christian work for the advancement of the general interests of the Congregational churches of this country, in accordance with resolutions and declarations made from time to time by the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States; and said corporation may cooperate with any other societies under the charge and control of churches of the Congregational order in the United States.

Sect. 3. Said corporation may acquire, by purchase, gift, devise, or otherwise, and hold and dispose of real and personal property for the purpose of its creation, not exceeding sixty thousand dollars in value, and may make any contracts for promoting its objects and purposes not inconsistent with law.

Sect. 4. The said National Council may make rules, orders, and regulations for the government of said board of Trustees, and said board shall, at all times, be subject to the direction and control of said Council.

Sect. 5. The persons named in the first section of this resolution shall be the corporators under this charter, until the appointment of Trustees by said National Council at its next regular meeting, which Trustees, when so appointed, shall be the successors of said corporators, with all the powers conferred upon this corpo-

ration, and said Council may fix the number of said Trustees and their terms of office, and may provide for filling vacancies in their number.

Sect. 6. This act of incorporation shall take effect when accepted by a majority of the persons mentioned in Section 1 hereof, and by said National Council at its next regular meeting."

And *whereas*, The persons named as corporators have unanimously accepted the aforesaid act;

Resolved, That the same be, and it is hereby, accepted by this Council.

Resolved, That this National Council, by this act, constitutes and empowers its provisional committee for the time being as the Trustees incorporated by the foregoing act, who shall have in charge and administer all moneys and other values belonging to it, or which may be contributed, bequeathed, or intrusted to it, limited only by their charter, the acts of this Council, or the expressed will of the donors.

Resolved, That these Trustees shall hold office during the period of three years, or until their successors are appointed. They may choose their own officers; adopt all needful rules; meet from time to time, as there is need; fill vacancies in their number occasioned by resignation or disability, during the intervals between the regular meetings of the Council; and adopt such measures to secure the ends of their appointment as seem to them expedient. Not less than four members shall constitute a quorum at their meetings for business, and they shall

keep a full record of all such meetings, and report to this body.

At a meeting of the Trustees, held at Memorial Hall, Hartford, Conn., Friday, Feb. 4, 1887, the report of the committee appointed by the National Council, Messrs. Nathaniel Shipman, Elisha Carpenter, and Charles E. Mitchell, of Connecticut, "to prepare by-laws for the Trustees of the National Council," was presented, accepted, and, after amendment, adopted as follows:—

BY-LAWS

1. The officers of the corporation shall be a president, vice-president, eleven directors, or such other members as may constitute for the time being, the provisional committee of the National Council, also a secretary, treasurer, auditor, and a finance committee of five persons, of whom the secretary and treasurer, if members of the corporation, shall be members *ex officio*.

All these officers shall be elected by ballot, and shall hold their respective offices for the term of three years, unless removed by death, disability, or resignation; that is to say, from the time of their election until the first meeting of the new Trustees appointed from time to time by the National Council at its triennial meetings.

All officers, except secretary, treasurer, and auditor, shall be members of the corporation.

2. The duty of the president shall be to preside at the meetings of the corporation and of the directors; to exercise a general oversight of the affairs of the corpora-

tion; to execute the instructions of the directors, and to make such suggestions to them as he may deem desirable.

3. The vice-president shall discharge the duties of the president in the absence of that officer.

4. The directors, of whom not less than four shall constitute a quorum, shall have the control, direction, and management of the property and affairs of the corporation; shall regulate salaries; shall make rules in regard to the disbursement of money; shall accept devises, legacies, and gifts upon the trusts respectively annexed to them; shall buy, sell, and convey by their attorney appointed for that purpose all real and personal property; shall fill vacancies in their own number and in all offices, the appointments so made to be in accordance with By-Law 1, and to continue until the next meeting of the corporation; and shall report to the National Council.

5. The secretary shall keep the records of the corporation, of the directors, and of the finance committee; shall conduct the correspondence of the society; shall any meeting of either body, which notices shall be sent by mail, postage paid, at least ten days before the date of the meetings; shall preserve all important documents; shall conduct the correspondence of the society; shall report annually to the directors, and prepare a report to the National Council for the directors.

6. The treasurer shall invest the funds of the corporation in accordance with the directions of the directors, or,

in the absence of such directions, in accordance with the written approval of the finance committee; shall have the custody of such funds; shall disburse the same, in accordance with the rules and votes of the directors; shall keep accurate accounts of his receipts and expenditures, and shall make an annual report to the directors.

He shall give bonds for the faithful performance of his trust for the term of three years, and until another person is appointed treasurer, in such sum as may be ordered from time to time by the directors.

7. The auditor shall annually, or oftener, in his discretion, personally audit and examine the securities belonging to the corporation and the accounts and vouchers of the treasurer, and shall report annually to the directors.

8. The finance committee shall meet at least annually, and more frequently if deemed by them advisable; shall make investments and reinvestments, subject to the approval of the directors; shall authorize all disbursements not specially ordered by the directors or by their rules; shall provide methods for the enlargement of the funds of the corporation; and shall have the immediate and direct management and oversight of the funds and financial affairs of the corporation in the intervals between the meetings of the directors, to whom they shall report annually.

Special meetings shall be held at the time and place named in the call of the chairman.

9. Other officers and committees may be appointed

as the needs of the corporation may demand, and, in the intervals between the meetings of the corporation, may be appointed by the directors.

10. A meeting of the corporation shall be held within ninety days after the adjournment of the National Council, in the city of Hartford, Connecticut, where all meetings of this corporation shall be held, at which the officers for the ensuing three years shall be chosen.

Annual meetings of the directors, for the examination of accounts, of the reports of the treasurer, secretary, auditor, and finance committee, for the allotment and distribution of income and for the general work of the corporation, shall be held in the month of September in each year, at such places as the finance committee previously to each meeting shall designate.

Special meetings of the corporation and of the directors shall be held upon the written call of the president or of any two members of the corporation addressed to the president. Such special meetings of the directors shall be held at the place directed by the president.

The secretary shall be always a resident of the State of Connecticut, and the records, when not in use in the meetings, shall be kept always in that State.

11. Any article of these by-laws may be changed or amended by a two-thirds vote of the members of the corporation present at any meeting after the service of one month's notice in writing of the proposed change.

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